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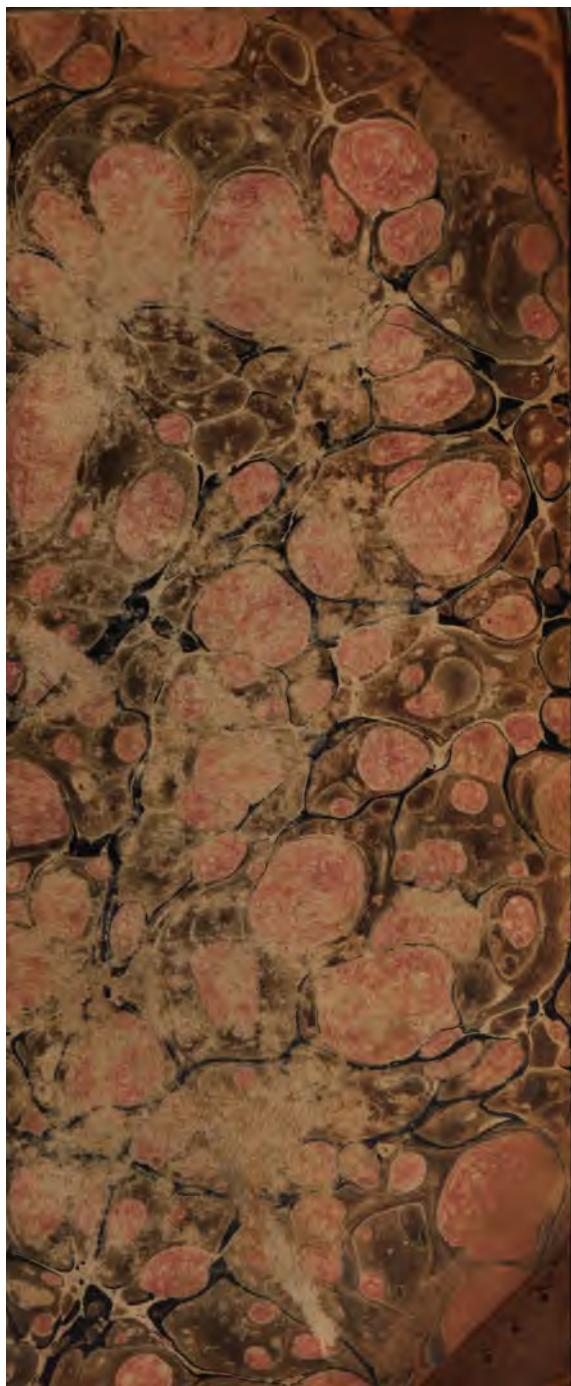
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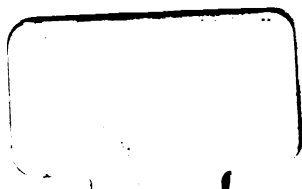


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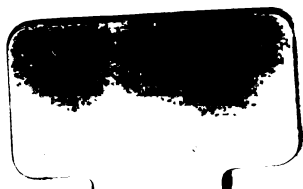


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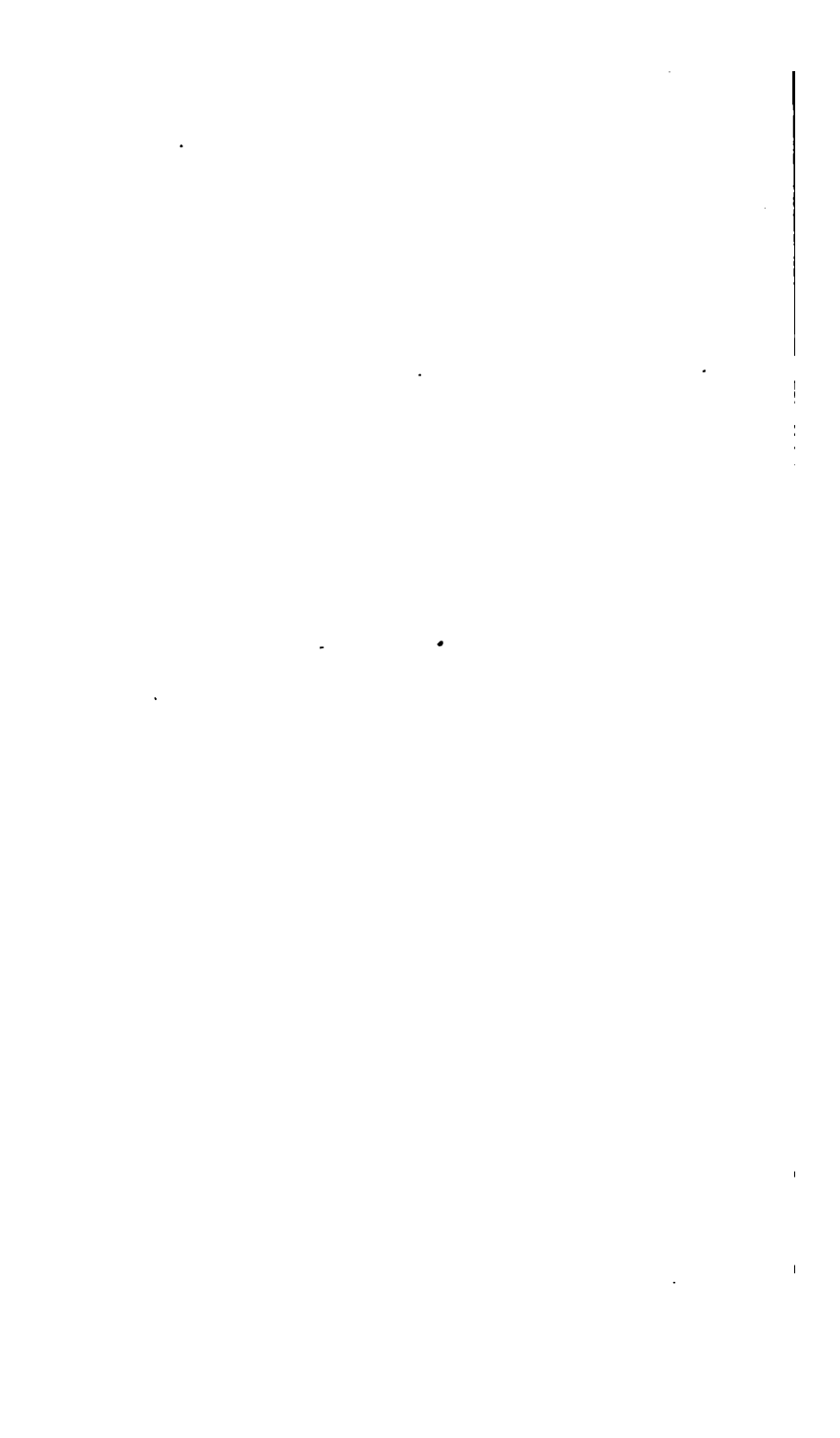
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# **A PREPARATION**

**FOR THE**

**SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.**



LONDON:

ROBERTSON AND PALMER, PRINTERS, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

*J.H. 1829*

# A PREPARATION

FOR THE

*73*

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER:

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

A FEW

OCCASIONAL PRAYERS.



THE WHOLE BEING SELECTED FROM THE WRITINGS

OF

JEREMY TAYLOR, D. D.

BISHOP OF DOWN.

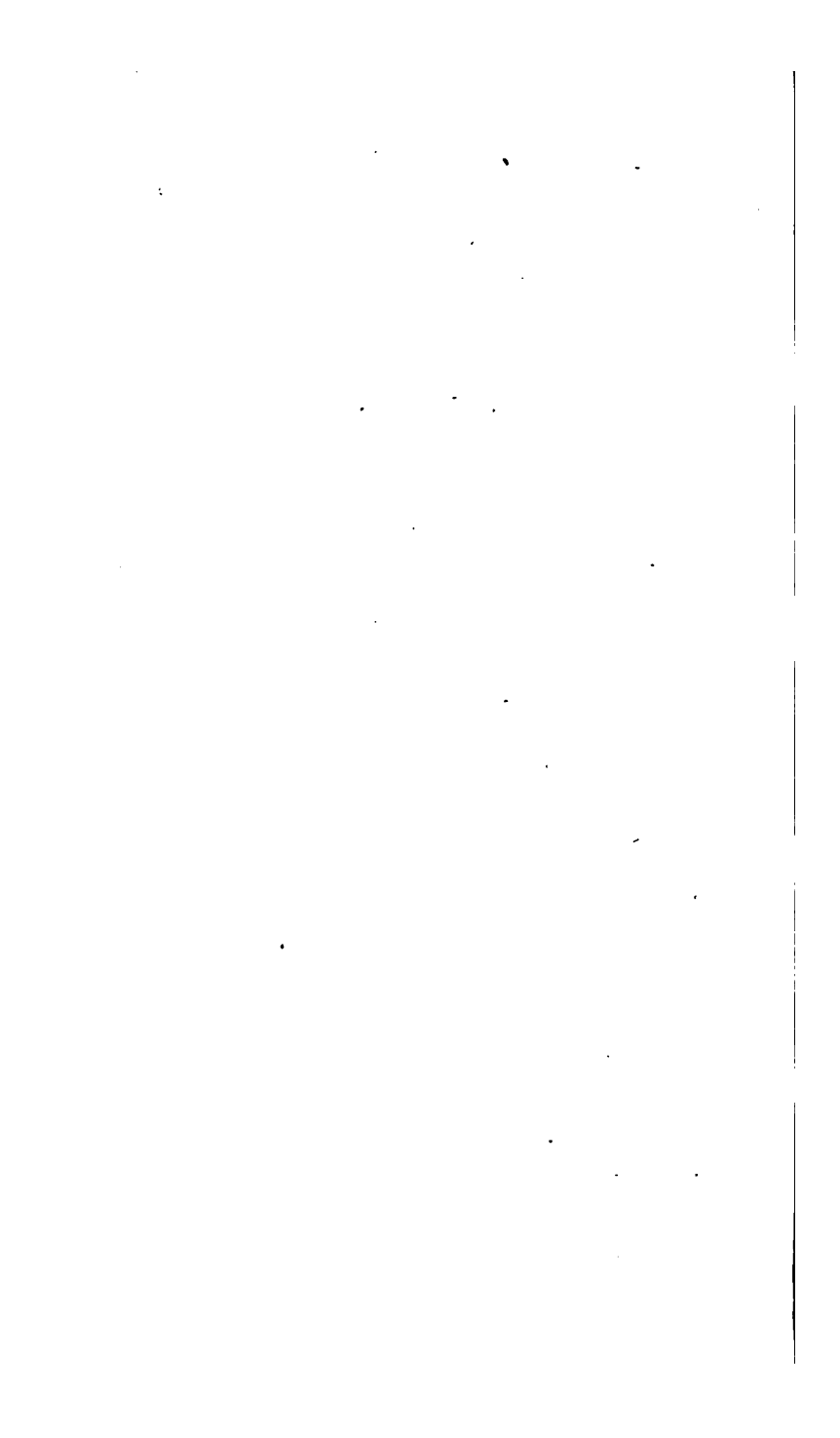
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PREPARATION  
FOR  
THE SACRAMENT.

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MONDAY BEFORE THE SACRAMENT.

*Of the Nature, Excellencies, Uses, and Intention of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.*

THE holy Communion or Supper of the Lord, is the most sacred, mysterious, and awful conjugation of secret and holy things and duties in the religion. It is not easy to be understood, it is not lightly to be received. It is not much opened in the writings of the New Testament, but still left in its mysterious nature; in it some espy strange things which God intended not, and others see not what God hath plainly told. Some



call that part of it a mystery which is none, and others think all of it nothing but a mere ceremony and a sign ; some say it is a sacrifice, and others call it a sacrament ; some schools of learning make it the instrument of grace in the hand of God ; others say, that it is God himself in that instrument of grace ; some come to be cured, some to be quickened, some to be nourished, and others to be made alive ; some out of fear and reverence take it but seldom, others, out of devotion, take it frequently ; some receive it as a means to procure great graces and blessings ; others as an eucharist, and an office of thanksgiving for what they have received ; some take it to strengthen their faith, others to beget it, and yet many affirm that it does neither, but supposes faith beforehand as a disposition ; and all these men have something of reason for what they pretend ; and yet the words of scripture from whence they pretend, are not so many as are the several pretensions.

My purpose is not to dispute, but to persuade; not to confute any one, but to instruct those that need; not to make a noise, but to excite devotion. I shall, therefore, discourse of the nature, excellencies, uses, and intention of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; the blessings and fruits of the Sacrament; all the advantages of a worthy communion, that we may understand what it is, what we go about, and how it is to be treated. I shall account also concerning all the duties of preparation; of the rules and manners of deportment in the receiving; the measures and instances of our duty, our comfort and conversation, in and after it.

The celebration of the Holy Sacrament is the great mysteriousness of the Christian religion, and succeeds to the most solemn rite of natural and Judaical religion, the law of sacrificing. For God spared mankind, and took the sacrifice of beasts together with our solemn prayers for an instrument of expiation.

But these could not purify the soul from sin, but were typical of the sacrifice of something that could. But nothing could do this, but either the offering of all that sinned, that every man should be the "anathema," or "devoted thing;" or else by some one of the same capacity, who, by some superadded excellency might, in his own personal sufferings, have a value great enough to satisfy for all the whole kind of sinning persons. This the Son of God, Jesus Christ, God and man, undertook, and finished by a sacrifice of himself upon the altar of the cross.

To this sense of the mystery are those excellent words of the apostle. "He bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that he might deliver us from the present evil world, and sanctify and purge us from all pollution of flesh and spirit, that he might destroy the works of the devil, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, that he might purchase to himself a peculiar people,

zealous of good works, and that we, being dead unto sin, might live unto righteousness."

In the reception of the blessed Sacrament, there are many blessings which proceed from our own actions, the conjugations of moral duties, the offices of preparation and reception, the reverence and the devotion; those graces which are intended to descend upon us from the Spirit of God in the use of the Sacrament itself I enumerate here. And first, I reckon, that the Sacrament is intended to increase our faith; for, although it is with us in this holy Sacrament as it was with Abraham in the sacrament of circumcision, he had the grace of faith before he was circumcised; and we are to believe, before we receive these symbols of Christ's death; yet as by loving we love more, and by the acts of patience we increase in the spirit of mortification, so by believing we believe more; this increase of faith not being only a natural and proper produc-

tion of the exercise of its own acts, but a blessing and an effect of the grace of God in that Sacrament. To eat the flesh, and to drink the blood of Christ sacramentally is an act of faith, and every act of faith joined with the Sacrament does grow by the nature of grace and the measures of a blessing.

Of the same consideration it is, that all the graces which we do exercise by the nature of the Sacrament requiring them, or by the necessity of the commandment of preparation, do here receive increase, upon the account of the same reason, but I instance only in that of charity, of which this is signally, and, by an especial mark, the Sacrament; and, therefore, these holy conventions are called by St. Jude. "feasts of charity," which were Christian festivals, in which also they had the Sacrament adjoined; and St. Paul affirms, in explication of the mystery, "we are one body, because we partake of one bread;" that is, plainly, Christ is our head, and we

the members of his body, and are united in this mystical union by the holy Sacrament, not only because it symbolically does teach our duty, and promotes the grace of charity; but even by the blessing of God, and the operation of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament which is designed to this very end, to be a reconciler and an atonement in the hand of God; a band of charity and the instrument of Christian communion. We are really joined to one common divine principle, Jesus Christ our Lord, and from him we do communicate in all the blessings of his grace, and the fruits of his passion; and we shall, if we abide in this union, be all one body of a spiritual church in heaven, there to reign with Christ for ever. Only it is to be observed in this, as in all other instances of the like nature, that the grace of God in the Sacrament, usually is a blessing upon our endeavours; for spiritual graces and the blessings of sanctification do not grow like grass, but like

corn; not whether we do any husbandry or no, but if we cultivate the ground, then by God's blessing the fruits will spring and make the farmer rich; if we be disposed to receive the Sacrament worthily, we shall receive this fruit also.

The blessed Sacrament is of great efficacy for the remission of sins; it is the ministry of the death of Christ, and the application of his blood, which blood was shed for the remission of sins, and is the great means of impetration, and the meritorious cause of it. But we must be infinitely careful to remember, that even the death of Christ brings no pardon to the impenitent, persevering sinner, but to him that repents truly; and so does the Sacrament of Christ's death; this can do no more than that, and, therefore, let no man come with his guilt about him, and in the heat, and in the affections of his sin, and hope to find his pardon by this ministry. He that thinks so will but deceive, will but ruin himself. The Holy Sacrament ope-

rates indeed, and consigns our pardon, not alone, but in conjunction with all that Christ requires as conditions of pardon: but when the conditions are present, the Sacrament ministers pardon, as pardon is ministered in this world, that is, by parts, and with power of revocation, by suspending the divine wrath, by procuring more graces, by obtaining time of repentance; and powers and possibilities of working out our salvation, and by setting forward the method and economy of our salvation.

I need add no more, but leave it to the meditation, to the joy and admiration of all Christian people, to think and to enumerate the blessings of this Sacrament, which is so excellent a representation of Christ's death, by Christ's commandment: we may pray here with all the solemnity and advantages imaginable: we may with hope and comfort use the words of David: "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." We are here very



likely to prevail for all blessings ; for this is, by way of eminency, glory and singularity, “ the cup of blessing which we bless,” and by which God will bless us, and for which he is to be blessed for evermore.

They who receive the blessed Sacrament must not suppose that the blessings of it are effected as health is by physic, or warmth by the contact and neighbourhood of fire ; but as music one way affects the soul, and witty discourses another, and joyful tidings a way differing from both the former, so the operations of the Sacrament are produced by an energy of a nature entirely differing from all things else : but however it is done, the thing that is done is this : no grace is there improved but what we bring along with us ; none increases but what we exercise ; we must bring faith along with us, and God will increase our faith ; we must come with charity, and we shall go away with more ; we must come with truly penitential hearts ; and

to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly : he shall be a better penitent when he hath eaten the sacrifice that was slain for our sins, and died in the body, that we might live in the spirit, and die no more.

Although the words, the names, and sayings, concerning the blessed Sacrament are mysterious and inexplicable, yet they do, nay, therefore, we are sure they signify some great thing ; they are in the very expression beyond our understandings, and therefore much more are the things themselves too high for us : but therefore we are taught three things :—1. To walk humbly with our God ; that is, in all intercourse with him, to acknowledge the infinite distance between his immensity and our nothing, his wisdom and our ignorance, his secrets and our apprehensions : he does more for us than we can understand : we must speak of his power and glory timorously and sparingly, with joyfulness and singleness or simplicity of

heart: so the first Christians eat their bread, their eucharist.—2. To walk charitably with our disagreeing brother, that this may be indeed a Sacrament of charity, and not to wonder if he be mistaken in his discourses of that which neither he nor you can understand. 3. Though it be hard to be understood, yet we must be careful that with simplicity we admire the secret, and accept the mystery, but at no hand by pride or ignorance, by interest or vanity, to wrest this mystery to ignoble senses, or to evil events, or to dangerous propositions, or to our own damnation.

He that desires to enter furthest into the secrets of this mystery, and to understand more than others, can better learn by love, than by inquiry. “He that keepeth the law of the Lord,getteth the understanding thereof,” saith the wise Bensirach: if he will prepare himself diligently, and carefully observe the dispensations of the Spirit, and receive it humbly, and treat it with great

reverence, and dwell in the communion of saints, and pass through the mystery with great devotion and purest simplicity, and converse with the purities of the Sacrament frequently and with holy intention, this man shall understand more by his experience, than the greatest clerks can by all their subtilties, the commentaries of the doctors, and the glosses of inquisitive men.

He that watches for the effects and blessings of the Sacrament, must look for them in no other manner than what is agreeable to the usual dispensation. We must not expect that, as soon as we have received the symbols, we shall have our doubts answered ; or be comforted in our spirit, as soon as we have given thanks for the holy blood ; or be satisfied in the inquiries of faith, as soon as the prayers of consecration and the whole ministry is ended ; or prevail in our most passionate desires as soon as we rise from our knees ; for we enter into the blessings of the Sacrament by

prayer, and the exercise of proper graces ; both which being spiritual instruments of virtues, work after the manner of spiritual things ; that is, not by any measure we have, but as God pleases. God's time is best ; but we must not judge his manner by our measures, nor measure eternity by time, or the issues of the Spirit by a measuring line. The effects of the Sacrament are to be expected as the effect of prayers ; not one prayer, nor one solemn meeting, but persevering and passionate, fervent and lasting prayers : a continual desire, and a daily address, is the way of prevailing : " In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand ; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper either this or that, or whether they shall be both alike good."

Let no man judge of himself, or of the blessings and efficacy of the Sacrament itself, or of the prosperity and acceptance of his service in this ministry, by any sensible relish, which he sometimes

perceives, and other times does not perceive. For these are fine accidents, and given to some persons often, to others very seldom, to all irregularly as God pleases, and sometimes are the effects of natural and accidental dispositions, and sometimes are illusions. But that no man may fall into inconvenience for want of them, we are to consider that the want of them proceeds from divers causes. It may be the palate of the soul is indisposed by listlessness or sorrow, anxiety or weariness. It may be we are too much immersed in secular affairs and earthly affections: or we have been unthankful to God, when we have received some of these spiritual pleasures, and he therefore withdraws those pleasant entertainments. Or it may be, we are therefore without relish because the Sacrament is too great for our weakness; like the bright sun to a mortal eye, the object is too big for our perceptions, and our little faculties. Sometimes God takes them away, lest we

be lifted up, and made vain. Sometimes for the confirmation and exercise of our faith; that we may live by faith and not by sense. Or it may be, that by this dryness of spirit God intends to make us the more fervent and resigned in our direct and solemn devotions, by the perceiving of our wants and weakness, and in the infinite inability and insufficiency of ourselves. Or else it happens to us irremediably and inevitably, that we may perceive these accidents are not the fruits of our labour, but gifts of God, dispensed wholly by the measures of his own choice. The want of just and severe dispositions to the holy Sacrament may possibly occasion this uncomfortableness. Or we do not relish the divine nutriment now so as at other times, for want of spiritual mastication; that is, because we have not considered deeply, and meditated wisely and holily. Or there is in us too much self-love and delight in, and adherence to the comforts we find in other objects. Or we are

careless of little sins, and give too much way to the daily incursions of the smaller irregularities of our lives. If upon the occasion of the want of these sensible comforts and delightful relishes, we examine the causes of the want, and suspect ourselves in these things, where our own faults may be the causes, and there make amends ; or if we submit ourselves in those particulars where the causes may relate to God, we shall do well, and receive profit. But because the pardon of sins is intended to be the great effect of a worthy communion, and of this men are most solicitous, and for this they pray passionately, and labour earnestly, and almost all their lives, and it may be in the day of their death have uncertain souls ; and this effect seems to be least discernible, and to be a secret reserved for the publication and trumpet of the archangel at the day of doom, yet, if we repent of our sins, and pray for pardon ; if we confess them, and forsake them ; if we fear God, and love him ; if



we find that our desires to please him do increase, that we are more watchful against sin, and hate it more: that we are thirsty after righteousness; if we find that we increase in duty, then we may look upon the tradition of the holy sacramental symbols as a direct consignment of pardon: not that it is there completed, for it is a work of time, it is as long in doing as repentance is in perfecting, it is the effect of that perpetually operating; and if we go on in duty, God will proceed to finish the methods of his grace, and snatch us from eternal death, which we have deserved, and bring us into glory.

Lastly. Since the sacrament is the great solemnity of prayer and imitation of Christ's intercession in Heaven, let us here be both charitable and religious in our prayers, interceding for all states of men and women in the Christian Church, and representing to God all the needs of ourselves and of our relatives; for then we pray with all the advantages of the

Spirit, when we pray in the faith of Christ crucified, in the love of God, and of our neighbour, in the advantages of solemn piety, in the communion of saints, in the imitation of Christ's intercession, and in the union with Christ himself spiritual and sacramental: and to such prayers as these nothing can be added, but that which will certainly come, that is, a blessed hearing and a gracious answer.

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Suppose every day to be a day of business: for your whole life is a race and a battle, a merchandise and a journey. Every day propound to yourself a rosary or a chaplet of good works, to present to God at night.

Be careful thou dost not speak a lie in thy prayers, which, though not observed, is frequently practised by careless persons, especially in the forms of confession, affirming things which they have not thought, professing sorrow which is not, making a vow they mean not.

## PRAYER I.

O Thou Shepherd of Israel, thou that feedest us like sheep; thou makest us to lie down in pleasant pastures, and leadest us by the still waters running from the clefts of the rock, from the wounds of our Lord, from the fountains of salvation; thou preparest a table for us, and anointest our heads with the unction from above, and our cup runneth over: let the blood of thy wounds, and the water of thy side, wash me clean, that I may, with a pure, clean soul, come to eat of the purest sacrifice, the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world. Thou givest thyself to be the food of our souls in the wonders of the sacrament, in the faith of thy word, in the blessings and graces of thy Spirit. Perform that in thy servant, which thou hast prepared and effected in thy Son; strengthen my infirmities; heal my sicknesses: give me strength to subdue my passions, to mortify my inordinations, to kill all my sins: increase thy graces in

my soul, enkindle a bright devotion; extinguish all my lusts and my pride, my envy and all my spiritual wickednesses; pardon all my sins, and fill me with thy Spirit, that by thy Spirit thou mayest dwell in me, and by obedience and love I may dwell in thee, and live in the life of grace, till it pass on to glory and immensity, by the power and the blessings, by the passion and intercession of the Word incarnate; whom I adore, and whom I love, and whom I will serve for ever and ever.

## PRAYER II.

Oh! mysterious God, ineffable and glorious majesty; what is this thou hast done to the sons of men? thou hast from thy bosom sent thy Son to take upon him our nature; in him thou hast opened the fountains of thy mercy, and hast invited all penitent sinners to come to be pardoned, all the oppressed to be eased, all the sorrowful to be comforted, all the sick to be cured, all the hungry to be filled, and the thirsty to be refreshed

with the waters of life. Admit me, oh ! God, to this great effusion of loving-kindness, that I may partake of the Lord Jesus, that by him I may be comforted in all my griefs, satisfied in all my doubts; healed of all the wounds of my soul, and the bruises of my spirit; and being filled with the bread of heaven, and armed with the strength of the Spirit, I may begin, continue, and finish my journey through this valley of tears, unto my portion of thy heavenly kingdom, whither our Lord is gone before to prepare a place for every loving and obedient soul. Grant this, oh ! eternal God, for his sake who died for us, and intercedes for us, and gives himself daily to us, our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communication of the Holy Spirit of God be with me, and all my relatives, and with all the servants of God for ever and ever. Amen.

## TUESDAY BEFORE THE SACRAMENT.

*Of Examination of Ourselves in order to the Holy Communion.*

THERE is no duty in Christianity that is partly solemn and partly moral, that hath in it more solemnity and more morality than this one duty; and in the greatest declension of religion still men have fear when they come to receive this holy Sacrament. They that have no religion will fear when they come to die, and they who have but a little will fear when they come to communicate. But, although men who believe this to be the greatest secret and sacredness of our religion, do more in their addresses to this than to any thing else, yet many of them that do come, consider that they are only commanded to examine themselves; and that, according to the ordinary methods, is easily done. It is no-

thing but asking ourselves a few questions: Do I believe? Do I repent? And am I in charity? To these the answers are ready enough. I do believe that Christ gave his body and blood for me, as for all mankind, and that Christ is mystically present in the Sacrament; I have been taught so all my life, and I have no reason to doubt it. I do also repent, according to the measures I am taught; I am sorry I have sinned, I wish I had not done it, and I promise to do so no more; and this I do constantly before every communion, and before the next comes I have reason enough to renew my vows; I was never so good as my word yet, but now I will. I am also in charity with all the world, and against this good time I pray to God to forgive them, for I do. This is the usual examination of consciences, to which we add the reading some good discourses of the Sacrament, and then we are dressed like the friends of the bridegroom, and with confidence come to the marriage-

supper of the Lamb. But this examination hath itself need to be examined. For it is but a relative duty and nothing of itself; for no man is the better for being examined, if being examined there follows nothing after it. He that is examined, either must be approved, or else, in St. Paul's phrase, he is a reprobate; and to what purpose is it that every man should examine himself, but in case that he find himself unfit, to abstain, and forbear to come.

---

*Of the examination of our Desires.*

EVERY one that comes to the holy Sacrament must have earnest affections and desires towards God and religion, and particularly towards these divine mysteries; and, therefore, he must examine accordingly, whether or no he be willing and passionately desirous to do all his duty? His saying that he is so, I do not suppose to be a sufficient satisfaction to a serious inquiry, unless he really feels himself to be so.



They that are easily diverted from communicating and apt to be excused from the solemnity, these men have just cause to suspect their desires to be too cold to kindle the fires upon this altar, and to consume this sacrifice: they have not love and come against their will. Some men are hindered by every thing; if a stranger come to the house, if they be indisposed with a little head-ache, if they have affairs of the world, if a neighbour be angry with them, if a merry meeting be appointed the day before; this is a suspicious indifferency and lukewarmness. They that are not desirous to use all opportunities and to take all advantages, and long for all the benefits, want very much of that hunger and thirst after the righteousness of God which is fulfilled in those mysteries, and to which Christ hath promised such ample satisfaction. I do not say, that every man is bound to communicate every time that he can have it, and that it is lukewarmness not to desire it so often as it is in our power; but he that refuses it when

it is in his opportunity, when his circumstances are fitted, when, by the measures of piety and religion, it is decent and useful to him to do it, that man is guilty of a criminal indifference; and when he does come, may fear that he hath not spiritual hunger enough for so divine a banquet.

They that in their preparation take the least measures that are practised or allowed, and rest there and increase not, have neither value for the blessing nor expectations of any fruit. For he that thinks there is no great matter in it, will have no great stomach for it; and he that will do no great matter for it, certainly expects no great excellency in it; and such are all they that take the least measures of preparation. But happy is that soul which comes to these springs of salvation as the hart to the water-brooks, panting and thirsty, longing and passionate, weary of sin and hating vanity, and reaching out the heart and hands to Christ: "Come unto me all

you that are weary and heavy laden," saith Christ; that is, they that groan under the burden of their sins, and feel the load of their infirmities, and desire pardon and remedy; they that love the instruments of grace as they are channels of salvation; they that come to the Sacrament out of earnest desires to receive the blessings of Christ's death and of his intercession, these are the welcome guests; for so saith God: "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it;" for "he hath filled the hungry with good things," said the holy virgin-mother, for Christ is food and refreshment to none else; "for the full he hath sent empty away." An earnest desire is a good preparation, and God will attend unto it. Concerning this, therefore, we are first to examine ourselves.

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*Of our examination concerning remanent affections to Sin.*

WE are quickly apt to think we are washed enough, and having remembered

our shameful falls we groan in method, and weep at certain times; we bid ourselves be sorrowful, and tune our heart-strings to the accent and key of the present solemnity; and as sorrow enters in a dress and imagery when we bid her, so she goes away when the scene is done. Here, here it is, that we are to examine whether shows do make a real change, whether shadows can be substances, and whether to begin a good work splendidly can effect all the purposes of its designation. Have you wept for your sin, so that you were, indeed, sorrowful and afflicted in your spirit? Are you so sorrowful, that you hate it? Do you so hate it, that you have left it? And have you so left it that you have left it all, and will you do so for ever? These are the particulars worth the inquiring after; and because, in examining ourselves concerning this, we can never be sure but by the event of things, and the heart being deceitful above all things, we secretly love what we profess to hate;

therefore, while we are in this preparatory duty of examination, the best sign whereby we can reasonably suppose all affection to sin to be gone away is, if we really believe, that we shall never any more commit that sin to which we are most tempted, and most inclined, and by which we most frequently fall. Here is a copious matter for examination.

Therefore let us leave all artificial examinations, and betake ourselves to the solid and material practices of a religious life. We must do something really before we can, by inquiring, tell how it is with us. When we have resolved, and in some measure performed our resolution; when we have stood the shock of a temptation and found our heart firm as in a day of religion; when we perceive sin to be weaker, and the kingdom of grace to grow in power; when we feel that all our holy vows are more than words, and that we are not the same easy fools, always giving God good words, but never performing them, but

that now we have set our foot upon the enemy, and are not infallibly carried away when our temptation comes, then we may inquire further, and look after the former signs and indications of spiritual life, and the just measures of preparation.

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*Of Examination of ourselves in the matter of our prayers in order to a holy Communion.*

THE holy Sacrament is in its nature and design a solemn prayer, and the imitation of the intercession which our glorious High Priest continually makes for us in heaven; and therefore, in order to do this work in solemnity, as we ought, it were very fit that we examine ourselves, how we do it in ordinary and daily offices. For since there are so many excellent promises made to prayer, and that nothing more disposes us to receive the grace of the Sacrament, and the blessings of communion, than holy prayer, it cannot be but we should feel

less evil, and much more good than we do, if our prayers were right. But the state of things is thus ; it is an easy duty, and there are many promises, and we do it often, and yet we prevail but little. What is the matter ? we patiently suffer our prayers to be rejected, and comfort ourselves by saying, that it may be the thing is not fit for us, it is against the decree of God, or against our good, or to be denied is better ; and there is a secret order of things and events, to which a denial does better minister than a concession. This is very true, but not always when we are denied ; for it is not always in mercy, but in anger very often we are denied, because our duty is ill performed ; for, if our prayers were right, the providence of God would often find out ways to reconcile his great ends with our great desires, and we might be saved hereafter, and yet delivered here besides ; and sometimes we should have heaven, and prosperity too ; and the cross should be sweetened,

and the days of affliction should for our sakes be shortened. Let us rectify our prayers, and try what the event will be; it is worth so much at least; but however, as to the present case, if we perform this duty pitifully and culpably, it is not to be expected we should communicate holily. Now in this, besides that we are to take account of our prayers, by all those measures of the spirit which we have learned in the holy scriptures, there are two great lines of duty by which we can well examine ourselves in this particular.

1. That our prayers must be the work of our hearts, not of our lips; that is, that we heartily desire what we so carefully pray for, and God knows this is not very ordinary. For besides that we are not in love with the things of God, and have no worthy value for religion, there are many things in our prayer which we ask for, and do not know what to do with if we had them; and we do not feel any want of them, and we care



not whether we have them, or no. We ask for the Spirit of God, for wisdom, and for a right judgment in all things ; and yet there are not many in our Christian assemblies who use to trouble themselves at all with judging concerning the mysteries of godliness. Men pray for humility, and yet at the same time think that all that which is indeed humility, is a pitiful poorness of spirit, pusillanimity, and want of good breeding. We pray for a contrite and a broken heart, and yet if we chance to be melancholy, we long to be comforted, and think that the lectures of the cross bring death, and therefore are not the way of eternal life. We pray sometimes that God may be first and last in all our thoughts, and yet we conceive it no great matter whether he be or no ; but we are sure that he is not, but the things of the world do take up the place of God, and yet we hope to be saved for all that, and consequently are very indifferent concerning the return of that

prayer. We frequently call upon God for his grace, that we may never fall into sin; now in this, besides that we have no hopes to be heard, and think it impossible to arrive to a state of life in which we shall not commit sins, yet if we do sin, we know there is a remedy so ready, that we believe we are not much the worse if we do. Here are prayers enough, but where are the desires all this while? We pray against pride, and covetousness, and gluttony; but nothing that we do, but is either pride or covetousness; so that our prayers are terminated upon a word, not upon a thing.

If we had desires as strong as our needs, and apprehensions answerable to our duty, it were not possible that a man should say his prayers, and never think of what he speaks: but as our attention is, so is our desire, trifling and impertinent; it is frightened away like a bird, which fears as much when you come to give it meat, as if you came with a

design of death. When, therefore, you are to give sentence concerning your prayers, your prayer-book is the least thing that is to be examined; your desires are the principal, for they are fountains both of action and passion. Desire what you pray for, for certain it is, you will pray passionately if you desire fervently. "Prayers are but the body of the bird, desires are its angel's wings."

2. If you will know how it is with you in the matter of your prayers, examine whether or no the form of your prayer be the rule of your life. Every petition to God is a precept to man; and when, in your litanies, you pray to be delivered from malice and hypocrisy, from pride and envy, from fornication, and every deadly sin; all that is but a line of duty, and tells us that we must never consent to an act of pride, or a thought of envy, to a temptation of uncleanness, or the evil paintings of hypocrisy. But we, when we

pray against a sin, think we have done enough ; and if we ask for a grace, suppose there is no more required. Now prayer is an instrument of help, a procuring auxiliary of God, that we may do our duty ; and why should we ask for help, if we be not ourselves bound to do the thing ? Look not therefore upon your prayers as a short method of ease and salvation, but as a perpetual monition of duty ; and by what we require of God, we see what he requires of us ; and if you want a system or collective body of holy precepts, you need no more but your prayer-book ; and if you look upon them first as duties, then as prayers ; that is, things fit to be desired, and fit to be laboured for, your prayers will be much more useful ; not so often vain, not so subject to illusion, not so destitute of effect, or so failing of the promises. Thus then we must examine : Is desire the measure of our prayer ? and is labour the fruit of our desire ? if so, then what we ask we shall receive as

the gift of God, and the reward of our labour; but unless this be the state of our prayer, we shall find that the receiving of the Sacrament will be as ineffective, because it will be as imperfect as our prayer. Whatsoever is offered to God, should be of the best; it should be a devout prayer, a fervent, humble, passionate supplication. An indevout prayer can never be joined with Christ's prayer. Fire will easily combine with fire, and flame marries flame; but a cold devotion, and the fire of this altar, can never be friendly, and unite in one pyramid to ascend together to the regions of God, and the element of love.

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*Of preparatory examination of ourselves in  
some other instances.*

HE that comes to the holy Communion, must examine himself concerning his passions; whether that which usually transports him to indecency and shame, to sin and folly, be brought under the dominion of grace, under the command

of reason, under the empire of the Spirit. For the passions of the soul are the violences and storms of reason; neither reason nor grace can be heard to speak when they are loud, and in vain it is that you tell a passionate person of the interests of wisdom and religion. It cannot in these, and all the like cases, be well, unless by examining we find that our spirit is more meek, our passions easier overcome, and the paroxysms or fits return less frequently, and the symptoms be less malignant. In this instance we must be quick and severe, and begin betimes to take a course with these vermin, and vipers of the soul. If we suppress our passions, that make inarticulate noises in the soul, if betimes, and in their infancy we make them silent, we shall find peace in all our days. Every excess of passion is a diminution of reason and religion; and when the acts are so frequent that none can number them, what effects they leave behind, and how much they disorder the state of

grace, none can tell. Either therefore suffer no passion to transport and govern you, or no examination can signify anything. He that checks at every word, and is jealous of every look, and disturbed at every accident, and takes all things by the wrong handle, and reflects upon all disturbances, spurs his passion, and strives to overtake sin, and to be tied to infelicity; but nothing can secure our religion, but binding our passions in chains, and doubling our guards upon them. Here, therefore, let us thus examine ourselves.

Are your desires unreasonable, passionate, impotent and transporting. If God refuses to give you what you desire, can you lay your head softly down upon the lap of providence, and rest content without it? Do you thankfully receive what he gives, and when he gives you not what you covet, can you still confess his goodness, and glorify his will and wisdom, without any amazement, dissatisfaction, or secret murmurs? Can

you be at peace within, when your purposes are defeated ; and at peace abroad with him that stands in the way between you and your desires ? And how is it with you in your anger ? Does it last so long, or return so frequently as before ? Have you the same malice, or have you the same peevishness ? Let us, without excuses, examine ourselves in this matter, for this is the great magazine of virtue or vice ; here dwells obedience or licentiousness ; a close knot, or an open liberty ; little pleasures, and great disturbances ; loss of time, and breach of vows. But if that we may come to Christ, we have stopped so many avenues of sin, and fountains of temptation, it may be very well, but without it, it can never.

He that comes to the holy communion, must examine himself whether his lusts be mortified, or whether they be only changed. A little examination will serve your turn, to know whether you have committed adultery, or be a swearer ;



but to know whether your intentions be holy, whether you love the praise of men more than the praise of God, whether religious or secular interest be the dearer, whether there be any hypocrisy or secret malice in your heart, hath something of more secret consideration. Do not you sometimes secretly rejoice in the diminution or disparagement of your brother? Do not you tell his sad and shameful story with some pleasure? Are you not quick in telling it, and willing enough it should be believed? Would you not fain have him less than yourself; not so eminent, not so well esteemed; and, therefore, do not you love to tell a true story of him that is not so very much to his commendation? These things must be examined, not that it can be thought that a man must be without fault, when he comes; but that he must cherish none, he must leave none unexamined; he must discover as much as he can, and crucify all that he can discover. He that hath mortified his carnal

appetite, and is proud of his conquest, or prays often, and reproaches him that does not; and gives alms, and secretly undervalues him that cannot; or is of a right opinion, but curses him that is of the wrong; or leaves his ambitious pursuits and vain-glorious purposes, but sits at home and is idle; is like a man who stands by a fire in a wide and a cold room, he scorches on one side, and freezes on the other; whereas the habits of virtue are like a great mantle, and the man is warm and well all over.

When we examine ourselves in order to the receiving of the blessed Sacrament, we must be careful that we do not limit our examination, and confine it to the time since our last receiving. For some persons who think themselves spiritual, usually examine how they have comported themselves since the last Communion only, and accordingly make judgment upon themselves; and these men possibly may do well enough, if they be of the number of them of whom

our blessed Saviour affirms, that they need no repentance ; that is, no change of life, no inquiry but into the measures of progression. But there are but few who live at that rate, and they that do, it may be, have not that confidence. But to them, and all men else, it were safe advice, that the inquiry how they have lived since the last Communion, should be but one part of their examination. Because they who so limit their inquiries, must needs suppose, that till then all was well, and that then they communicated worthily ; and consequently, that all the whole work and economy of salvation was then performed ; every one of which supposals hath an uncertain truth, but a very certain danger.

True it is, that at every Communion, we are to begin a new life ; and so we ought every day ; that is, we ought to be as zealous, and as penitent, as resolute and affectionate, as if we never had begun before, we ought so to suspect the imperfection of what is past, that we are

to look upon ourselves but as new beginners; that by apprehending the same necessity, we may have the same passion, the same fervour, and holy fires. But in this matter of examining, we must consider how much hath been pardoned, that we may examine how thankful we have been, and what returns we have made; we must observe all our usual failings, that we may now set our guards accordingly; we must remember in what weak part we are smitten, that we may still pray against it; and we must renew our sad remembrances, that we may continue our sad repentances; and we must look upon our whole life, that we may be truly humbled.

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**WATCH** over thyself, counsel thyself, reprove thyself, censure thyself, and judge thyself impartially; whatever thou dost to others, do not neglect thyself; for every man profits so much as he does violence to himself.

Soon may a man lose that by negligence, which hath by much labour and a long time, and a mighty grace scarcely been obtained. And what shall become of us before night, who are weary so early in the morning? Woe be to that man who would be at rest, even when he hath scarcely a footstep of holiness appearing in his conversation.

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PRAYER.

O eternal and most glorious God, who sittest in heaven, ruling over all things from the beginning; thou dwellest on high, and yet humblest thyself to behold the things that are in heaven and earth. Thou hast searched me, O Lord, and known me; thou understandest my thoughts afar off, and art acquainted with all my ways; for there is not a word in my tongue, but thou, O Lord, knowest it altogether. Be pleased to impart unto thy servant a ray of thy heavenly light, a beam of the sun of righteousness; open mine eyes, that I

may see the wondrous things of thy law, that I may walk in them all my days. Set all my sins before my face, that I may speedily, and earnestly, and perfectly repent and forsake them all. Give me a sight of my infirmities, that I may watch against them; discover to me all my evil and weak principles, that I may reform them. And whatsoever is wanting in me towards the understanding of any thing whereby I may please thee and perfect my duty, I beg of thee to reveal that also unto me; that my duty may not be undiscerned, and my faith may not be reprov'd, and my affections may not be perverse, and hardened in their foolish pursuance, and a secret sin may not lie undiscovered and corrupting my soul. Give me an ingenuous and a severe spirit, that whatever judgment of charity I make concerning others, I may give a right judgment concerning my own state and actions, condemning the criminal, censuring the suspicious, suspecting what

seems allowable, and watchful even over the best; that I may, in the spirit of repentance and mortification, correct all my irregularities, and reform my errors, and improve the good things which thou hast given me; that endeavouring to approve my actions to my conscience, and my conscience to thy law, I may not be a reprobate, but approved by thee in the great day of examination of all the world, and be reckoned amongst thy elect, through Jesus Christ our Lord: Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

WEDNESDAY BEFORE THE  
SACRAMENT.

*Of Faith as it is a necessary disposition to  
the blessed Sacrament.*

EXAMINATION of ourselves is an inquiry whether we have those dispositions which are necessary to a worthy communion. Our next inquiry is after the dispositions themselves, what they ought to be, and what they ought to effect; that we may really be that which we desire to be found when we are examined. I have yet only described the ways of examining; now I am to set down those things whereby we can be approved, and without which we can never approach to these divine mysteries with worthiness, or depart with joy. These are three: 1. Faith, 2. Charity, 3. Repentance.



1. Every true Christian believer must consent to the articles of his belief by an assent firmer than can be naturally produced from the ordinary arguments of his persuasion. Men believe the resurrection, but it is because they are taught it in their childhood, and they inquire no further in their age; their parents and their priests, the laws of the church and the religion of the country make up the demonstration; but because their faith is no stronger than to be the daughter of such arguments, we find they commonly live at such a rate, as if they did neither believe nor care whether it were so or no. The confidence of the article makes them not to leave off violently to pursue the interests of this world, and to love and labour for the other.

He that only consents to an article because it is evident, is, indeed, convinced, but hath no excellency in his faith, but what is natural, nothing that is gracious and moral; true Christian

faith must have in it something of obscurity, something that must be made up by duty and by obedience; but it is nothing but this,—we must trust the evidence of God in the obscurity of the thing; and then to trust the article, because God hath said it, must have in it an excellency which God loves, and that he will reward. In order to this it is highly considerable, that the greatest argument to prove our religion, is the goodness and the holiness of it. But then for others, who can inquire better; their inquiries also must be modest and humble; they must not disbelieve an article in Christianity which is not proved like a conclusion in geometry; they must not be witty to object, and curious to inquire beyond their limit; for some are so ingeniously miserable, that they will never believe a proposition in divinity, if any thing can be said against it; they will be credulous enough in all the affairs of their life, but impenetrable by a sermon of the gospel; they will be-

lieve the word of a man, and the promise of their neighbour; but a promise of scripture signifies nothing unless it can be proved like a proposition in the metaphysics. The reason of these things is plain: they do not love the thing; their interest is against it; they have no joy in religion; they are not willing and desirous that the things shall appear true; but if I love my religion, nothing can take me from it, unless it can pretend to be more useful and more amiable, more perfective and more excellent than heaven and immortality, and a kingdom and a crown of peace, and all the things and all the glories of the eternal God.

2. That faith which disposes to the holy Communion, must have in it a fullness of confidence and relying upon God, a trusting in, and a real expectation of the event of all the promises of the gospel. God hath promised sufficient for the things of this life to them that serve him. They who have great

revenues and full bags can easily trust this promise, but if thou hast neither money, nor friends, if the labour of thy hands and the success of thy labour fails thee, how is it then? Can you then rely upon the promise? What means your melancholy and your fear? Can God only help with means, or cannot he also make the means, or help without them, or see them when you see them not? or is it that you fear whether he will or no? He that hath promised, if he be just, is always willing, and, therefore, if you do not doubt of his power, why should you at all doubt of his willingness? For if he were not able, he were not Almighty; if he were not willing to perform his promise, then he were not just; and he that suspects that hath neither faith in, nor love for, God: of all things in the world, faith never distrusts the good will of God, in which he most glories to communicate himself to mankind. If yet your fear objects, and says that all is well on God's part;

but you have provoked him by your sins, and have lost all title to the promise, I can say nothing against that, but that you must speedily repent and amend your fault, and then all will be quickly well on your part also, and your faith will have no objection, and your fears will have no excuse. But let us try again: God hath promised that "all things should work together for good to them that fear him." Do we believe that our present affliction will do so? Will the loss of our goods, the diminution of our revenue, the omission of our honour, the death of our eldest son, the unkindness of a husband, the frown of our prince, the defeating of our secular hopes, the unprosperous event of our employment? Do we find that our faith is right enough, really to be satisfied in these things so much as to be pleased with God's order and method of doing good to us by these displeasing instruments? Can we rejoice under the mercy by joys of believing, at the same time,

when we groan under the affliction by the passion of sense? Do we observe the design of cure, when we feel the pain and the smart? Are we patient under the evil, being supported by expectation of the good which is promised to follow? This is the proper work of faith, and its best indication; but our want of faith does cause all the excess of trouble. For the question is not whether or no we be afflicted; whether we be sick, or crossed in our designs, or deprived of our children; this we feel and mourn for; but the question is, whether all this may not, or be not intended to bring good to us? Not whether God smiles or no, but to what purpose he smiles? Not whether this be not evil, but whether this evil will not bring good to us? If we do believe, why are we without comfort and without patience? If we do not believe it, where is our faith?

3. That faith which is a worthy preparatory to the holy Communion must

be the actual principle and effective of a good life; a faith in the threatenings and in the commandments of God. Who can pretend to be a Christian and yet not believe these words of St. Paul: "Follow after peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see God;" and yet, if we do believe it, what do we think will become of us, who neither follow peace nor holiness, but follow our anger, and pursue our lust? If we do believe this, we had need look about us, and live at another rate than men commonly do. But we still remain peevish and angry, malicious and implacable, apt to quarrel and hard to be reconciled, lovers of money and lovers of pleasures, but careless of holiness and religion; as if they were things fit only to be talked on, and to be the subject of theological discourses, but not the rule of our lives and the matter of our care. It is expressly said by St. Paul: "he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation

to himself." Now, if we observe what crowds of people in great cities come to the holy Communion, good and bad, penitent and impenitent, the covetous and the proud, we may easily perceive, that not many men believe these words. Our blessed Saviour told us, that "with what measure we mete to others, it shall be measured to us again;" but who almost believes this and considers what it means? Will you be content that God should despise you, as you despise your brother? that he should be as soon angry with you, as you are with him? that he should strike you as hastily, and as seldom pardon you, and never bear with your infirmities, and as seldom interpret fairly what you say or do, and be revenged as frequently as you would be? And what think we of these sayings: "Into the heavenly Jerusalem, there shall in nowise enter any thing that defileth or prophaneth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie?" Do men believe God, and yet doing



these things, hope to be saved for all these terrible sayings? "Now the works of the flesh are manifest; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, &c.; of which I tell you before, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Certainly, if we did believe that these things are spoken in earnest, we should not make such a May-game of the fearful lectures of damnation. For if these words be true, will men leave their sins, or are they resolved to suffer damnation, as being less troublesome than to quit their vain sins? Surely that is not it; but they have some little subterfuges and illusions to trust to. They say they will rely upon God's mercy. Well they may; if, in "well-doing, they commit their souls to him as to a faithful Creator;" but will they make God their enemy, and then trust in him while he remains so? That will prove an intolerable experiment; for so said God when he caused his name to be proclaimed to the host of Israel:

“ The Lord God merciful and gracious,” he caused to be added, “ and that will by no means quit the guilty.” By no means? No, by no means. Let us believe that as well as the other. For the passion of our Redeemer, the intercession of our high Priest, the sacraments of the church, the body and blood of Christ, the mercies of God, the saying, Lord, Lord, the privileges of Christians, and the absolution of the Priest;—none of all this, and all this together shall do him good that remains guilty; that is, who is impenitent and does not forsake his sin. If we had faith, we should believe this, and should not dare to come to the holy Communion with an actual guiltiness of many crimes, and in confidence of pardon, against all the truth of divine revelations, and therefore without faith.

But then, here we may consider, that no man in this case can hope to be excused from the necessities of a holy life, upon pretence of being saved by his

faith. For, if the case be thus, these men have it not. For, he that believes in God, believes his words, and they are very terrible to all evil persons ; for in Christ Jesus nothing can avail but a new creature, nothing but keeping the commandments of God, nothing but faith working by charity ; they are the words of God. Wicked men, therefore, can never hope to be saved by their faith, or by their faith to be worthy communicants, for they have it not. Who then can ? He only by his faith is worthily disposed to the communion, and by his faith can be saved, who by his faith lives a life of grace, whose faith is to him a magazine of holy principles, whose faith endears obedience, and is the nurse of a holy hope, and the mother of a never-failing charity. He shall be saved by his faith, who by his faith is more than conqueror, who resists the devil and makes him fly ; and gives laws to his passions, and makes them obedient ; who by his faith overcomes the world

and removes mountains, the mountains of pride and vanity, ambitious and secular designs; and whose faith casteth out devils, the devil of lust, and the devil of intemperance: he whose faith opens the blind man's eyes, and makes him to see the things of God, and cures the lame hypocrite, and makes him to walk uprightly. For "these signs shall follow them that believe," (said our blessed Saviour,) and by these, as by the "wedding garment," we are fitted to this heavenly "supper" of the king.

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*Of the proper and specific work of Faith in the reception of the holy Communion.*

THAT we may know the proper offices of faith in the believing what relates to the holy Sacrament, I shall describe it in several propositions.

1. It cannot be the duty of faith, to believe any thing against our sense; what we see and taste to be bread, what we see, and taste, and smell to be wine, no faith can engage us to believe the

contrary. If the perception of sense were not finally to be relied upon, miracles could never be a demonstration; nor any strange court prove an unknown proposition, for the miracle can never prove the article, unless our eyes or hands approve the miracle; and the divinity of Christ's person, and his mission, and his power, could never have been proved by the resurrection, but that the resurrection was certain and evident to the eyes and the hands of so many witnesses. Tertullian said, "that it is not only unreasonable, but unlawful to contradict the testimony of our sense; lest the same question be made of Christ himself; lest it be suspected that he also might be deceived when he heard his Father's voice from heaven." That, therefore, which we see upon our altars and tables, that which the priest handles, that which the communicant does taste, is bread and wine; our senses tell us that it is so, and therefore faith cannot be enjoined to believe it not to be so.

Faith gives a new light to the soul, but it does not put our eyes out ; and what God hath given us in our nature, could never be intended as a snare to religion, or to engage us to believe a lie. Faith sees more in the Sacrament than the eye does, and tastes in it more than the tongue does, but nothing against it ; and as God hath not two wills contradictory to each other, so neither hath he given us two notices and perceptions of objects whereof the one is affirmative, and the other negative of the same thing.

2. Whatsoever is against right reason, that no faith can oblige us to believe ; for although reason is not the positive and affirmative measure of our faith, and God can do more than we can understand, and our faith ought to be larger than our reason, and take something into her heart, that reason can never take into her eye, yet in all our creed there can be nothing against reason. If true reason justly contradicts an article, it is not of the household of faith.

If, therefore, any society of men calls upon us to believe, in our religion, what is false in our experience ; to affirm that to be done which we know is impossible it ever can be done, to wink hard that we may see the better ; to be unreasonable men, that we may offer to God a reasonable sacrifice, they make religion so to be seated in the will that our understanding will be useless, and can never minister to it.

3. Whatsoever is matter of curiosity, that our faith is not obliged to believe or confess. For the faith of a Christian is pure as light, plain as a commandment, easy as children's lessons ; it is not given to puzzle the understanding, but to instruct it ; it brings charity to it, not darkness and obscurity. Our faith in this Sacrament, is not obliged to inquire, or to tell how the holy bread can feed the soul, or the chalice purify our spirits ; how Christ is united to us ; and yet we remain imperfect even then, when we are all one with him that is

perfect, there is no want of faith, though we do not understand the secret manner how Christ is really present, and yet this reality be no other but a reality of event, and positive effect.

The faith that is required of those who come to the holy Communion, is of what is revealed plainly, and taught usefully; what sets devotion forward, not what ministers to curiosity; that which the good and the plain, the easy and the simple man can understand; for if thou canst not understand the reciprocations and pulses of thy own arteries, the motion of thy blood, the seat of thy memory, the rule of thy dreams, the manner of digestion, the disease of thy bowels, and the distempers of thy spleen, things that thou bearest about thee, that cause to thee pain and sorrow; it is not to be expected that thou shouldest understand the secrets of God, the causes of his will, the impulse of his grace, the manner of his sacraments, and the economy



of his Spirit. God's works are secret, and his words are deep, and his dispensations mysterious, and, therefore, too high for thy understanding. And, therefore, since faith is not concerned in intrigues and hard questions, it were very well if the Sacrament itself were not disguised, and charity disordered by that which is not a help, but a temptation to faith itself. Christ hath told us, this is his body—this is his blood; believe it, and so receive it; but he hath not told us how it is so; it is behind a cloud, and tied up with a knot of secrecy; therefore let us lay our finger on our mouth, and worship humbly. But he that looks into the eye of the sun shall be blind, and he that searches into the secrets of majesty shall be confounded with the glory. But then, unless by faith we believe all this that Christ said, there is nothing remaining but the outward symbols, and the sense of flesh and blood, which profits nothing. But, to believe in Christ, is to eat the

flesh of Christ: "I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me shall not hunger;" that is, he shall be filled with Christ; "and he that believeth in me shall not thirst." Coming to Christ and believing in him, is the same thing; that is, he that believes Christ's words, and obeys his commandments; he that owns Christ for his lawgiver and his master, for his Lord and his Redeemer; he who lays down his sins in the grave of Jesus, and lays down himself at the foot of the cross, and his cares at the door of the temple, and his sorrows at the throne of grace; he who comes to Christ to be instructed, to be commanded, to be relieved, and to be comforted; to this person Christ gives his body and blood, that is, food from heaven. And then the bread of life and the body of Christ, and eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, are nothing else but mysterious and sacramental expressions of this great excellency; that whoever does this, shall partake of all the benefits of the cross of Christ,

where his body was broken, and his blood was poured forth for the remission of our sins, and the salvation of the world. Here is the exercise of our faith and acts of obedience, and the confirmation of our hope and the increase of our charity. So that although God be gracious in every dispensation, yet he is bountiful in this; although we serve God in every virtue, yet in the worthy reception of this divine sacrament there must be a conjugation of virtues, and, therefore, we serve him more; we drink deep of his loving-kindness in effusion of it; he always fills our cup, but here it runs over.

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THINK not all is well within, when all is well without; or that thy being pleased is a sign that God is pleased; but suspect every thing that is prosperous, unless it promotes piety, and charity, and humility.

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IN thy prayers wait for God, and think not every hearty prayer can procure every thing thou askest. These things which the saints did not obtain without many prayers, and much labour, and a shower of tears, and a long-protracted watchfulness and industry, do thou expect also in its own time, and by its usual measures. Do thou valiantly, and hope confidently, and wait patiently, and thou shalt find thou wilt not be deceived.

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## PRAYER.

O blessed Jesu, I adore and bless thy glorious Majesty, that thou art pleased for all the infinite multiplication of my sins, and innumerable violations of thy holy law, still to give thyself unto me, to convey health, and grace, and life, and hopes of glory in the most blessed Sacrament. I adore thee, O most righteous Redeemer, that thou art pleased under the visible signs of bread

and wine to convey unto our souls thy holy body and blood; and all the benefits of thy bitter passion. Grant that this holy Sacrament may be a light unto mine eyes, a guide to my understanding, a joy to my soul; that by its strength I may subdue and mortify the whole body of sin in me; and that it may produce in me constancy in faith, fulness of wisdom, perfection and accomplishment of all thy righteous commandments, and such a blessed union with thee, that I may never more live unto myself, or to the world, but to thee only; and by the refreshments of an holy hope I may be led through the paths of a good life and persevering piety to the communion and possession of thy kingdom. O Lord God, who hast made all things of nought, make me a new creature; and, of a sinful man, make me holy, and just, and merciful; that I may receive thy precious body devoutly, reverently, with meekness, contrition, and great affection, with spi-

ritual comfort and gladness at thy mystical presence. Feed my soul with bread from heaven, fill me with charity, conform me to thy will in all things, save me from all dangers bodily and ghostly, assist and guide me in all doubts and fears, prepare and strengthen me against all sudden incursions of temptations, cleanse me from all stains of sin, and suffer nothing to abide in me, but thyself only who art the life of souls, the food of the elect, and the joy of angels.

Transfix my soul, O blessed Jesu, with so great love of thee, so great devotion in receiving the holy Sacrament, that I may be transformed to the fellowship of thy sufferings, and admitted to a participation of all the benefits of thy passion, and to a communion of thy graces and thy glories. Take thou possession of my soul, and be thou Lord over me and all my faculties, and preserve me with great mercy and tenderness, that no doubting or infidelity, no

impenitence or remanent affection to sin, no impurity or irreverence, may make me unworthy and incapable of thy glorious approach. Let not my sins crucify the Lord of life again: let it not be said concerning me: "The hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table;" that this holy communion may not be unto me an occasion of death, but a blessed peace-offering for my sins, and a gate of life and glory. Grant this, oh! blessed God, for his sake, who is both Sacrifice and Priest, the Master of the Feast itself; even Jesus Christ, to whom with thee, O Father, and thy Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

THURSDAY BEFORE THE  
SACRAMENT.

*Of Charity preparatory to the Blessed  
Sacrament.*

THE second great instrument of preparation to the blessed Sacrament is charity; this is that fire from heaven, which, unless it does enkindle the sacrifice, God will never accept it for an atonement. By our love and charity he will pardon us, and he will comfort us, and he will judge us, and he will save us; and it can never be well with us, till love, that governs heaven itself, be the prince of all our actions and our passions. By this we know we are translated from death to life by our love unto our brethren; that is the testimonial of our comfort. "I was hungry, and ye fed me; I was hungry, and ye fed me not;" these are the tables of our final judg-



ment. "If ye love me, keep my commandments;" that is the measure of our obedience. "In that ye have done kindness to one of these little ones, ye have done it unto me;" that is the installing of the saints in their thrones of glory. "If thou bringest a gift to the altar, leave it there; go and be reconciled to thy brother;" that is the great instrument of our being accepted. No man can love God, and hate his brother; that is the rule of our examination in this particular. "This is a new commandment, that ye love one another;" there is the great precept of the gospel. This is an old commandment, that ye love one another; there is the very law of nature. And to sum up all, "love is the fulfilling of the law;" that is the excellency and perfection of a man; and there is the expectation of all reward, and the doing all our duty, and the sanctification of every action, and the spirit of life; it is the heart, and the fire, and the salt of every sacrifice; it

is the crown of every communion. And all this mysterious excellency is perfectly represented by that divine exhortation made by St. Paul: "Purge out, therefore, the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

Now concerning this grace, if we will inquire after it, in order to a worthy receiving the holy Communion, we must inquire after the effects and offices of charity; and by the good we do, or are ready to do, take an account of ourselves in this particular. The offices and general duties are three: doing good, speaking good, and forgiving evil.

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*Of doing good to our Neighbours.*

He that loves me, does me good; for, until love be beneficial, it is not my

good, but his fancy and pleasure that delights in me. I do not examine this duty by our alms alone; for, although they are an excellent instrument of life, ("for alms deliver from death," said the angel to old Tobit,) yet there are some who are bountiful to the poor, and yet not charitable to their neighbour. You can best tell whether you have charity to your brother, by your willingness to oblige him, and do him real benefit, and keeping him from all the harm we can. Do you do good to all you can? Will you willingly give friendly counsel? Do you readily excuse your neighbour's faults? Do you rejoice when he is made glad? Do you delight in his honour and prosperity? Do you stop his entry into folly and shame? Do not you laugh at his miscarriages? Do you stand ready in mind to do all good offices to all you can converse with? For nothing makes societies so fair and lasting as the mutual endearment of each other by good offices; and never any man did a good

turn to his brother, but one time or other himself did eat the fruit of it. The good man in the Greek epigram, that found a dead man's skull unburied, in kindness digging a grave for it, opened the enclosures of a treasure. In all the sacrifices of the ancients they were hugely kind to one another; they invited their friends to partake the sacrifice, and called them to a portion of the pardon, that they might eat of that mercy, and that forgiveness, which they expected from their god. Then they sent portions to the absent, and united hearts, and knitted interests by a thread and chain of mutual acts of kindness and endearment; and so should we, when we come to this holy sacrifice; we must keep our hearts entire to God, and divide them amongst our brethren, and heartily love all them who feed upon the same Christ, who live by the same faith, who are entertained by the same hope, and are confederate by the laws, by the acts, and emanation of the same

charity. But this thing is plain, no discourse here is useful but an exhortation; all that can be said is this, that it is decent and it is useful; and it is necessary that we be very kind and very charitable to all the members of Christ, with whom we are joined with the ligatures of the same body, and supported by the strength of the same nourishment, and blessed by influences from the same divine Head, the Lord Jesus Christ.

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*Of speaking good of our Neighbours.*

If it be not in our hands to do well, it must be in our hearts, and the contrary must never be upon our tongues; we are sure we can speak well, or we can abstain from speaking ill. If it be otherwise with us, we cannot be welcome here, we shall not worthily communicate. He that delights to report evil things of me, that will not endure so much as to have me well spoken of, hath certainly but little kindness to me; he would very hardly die for me, or lay out

great sums of money for me, that will not afford me the cheapest charity of a good word. We should easily consent, that he that killed a man yesterday, and is like to kill another to-morrow, were not this day worthy to communicate; now, some persons had rather lose their lives, than lose their honour; what then think we of their preparation to the holy Communion, that make nothing of murdering their neighbours' fame? that either invent evil stories falsely and maliciously, or believing them easily, report them quickly, and aggravate them spitefully, and scatter them diligently? "The mouth that speaketh lies," or stings his neighbour, or "boasteth proud things" is not fit to drink the blood of the sacrificed Lamb. Christ enters not into those lips from whence slander and evil-speakings do proceed, and the tongue that loves to dispraise his brother, cannot worthily celebrate the praises and talk of the glorious things of God; and let no man deceive

himself; an injurious talker, is an habitual sinner, and he that does not "learn the discipline of the tongue," can never have the charity of Christ, and the blessings of the peaceful Sacrament. A good man will be as careful of the reputation as of the life of his brother, and "to be apt to speak well of all men, is a sign of a charitable and a good man;" and that goes a great way in our preparation to a worthy Communion.

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*Forgiveness of Injuries, a necessary part  
of Preparation to the Holy Sacrament.*

THIS duty is expressed, not only as obligatory to us, but as relative to the holy Sacrament, in the words of our blessed Saviour: "When thou bringest thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift and go, be first reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer." St. Cyril tells, that the ancient Christians were wont, before the Communion, to kiss each

other, as a symbol of reconciled minds, and forgotten injuries, and in confirmation of this practice, brings the preceptive words of our Lord now recited. And our blessed Saviour himself adds a parallel to the first precept, which gives light and explication to it: "When you stand praying, if you have any thing against any man, forgive him, that your Father which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses." It is infinitely reasonable, that he that needs, and comes for, a great pardon, should not stick at the giving of a little; and he that desires to be like God, and comes to be united to him, should do like him, that is, rejoice in remitting offences, rather than in punishing them. In this, as in all other things, we must follow God's example; for, in this alone, he else will follow ours. The duty is plain, and the reason urgent, and the commandment express, and the threatening terrible, and the promise excellent. There is in this no more to be said, but



that we consider, concerning the manner of reducing it to practice, in order to our preparation to a worthy Communion.

1. Therefore we are bound to forgive every man that offends us. For concerning every one of our brethren it is equally true, that he is an excellent creation, that he is heir of the same hopes, born to the same inheritance, nursed by the church, which is his mother and thine; that there is in him God's image, drawn by the same hand, described in the same lines; that there are in him many good things for which he can be loved, and many reasons in him for which he ought to be pardoned. God hath made many decrees for him, and the angels minister to him, and Christ died for him, and his soul is very precious in the eyes of God and in heaven itself; and why shouldst thou despise, and why shouldst thou stand out against all this?

2. Not only every man, but every

offence must be forgiven. The wise man says, "That for some things there will be no returning again." A blow indeed, or an evil word, may be pardoned; but for "upbraiding, and pride, and disclosing secrets, and a treacherous wound, every friend will depart, and never return again." But he only tells us how it will be, not what ought to be; what it is likely to be in matter of fact, not how it should be in case of conscience; and he means this of societies and civil friendships; but in religion we go higher, and even these also, and greater than these must be pardoned; unless we would prescribe a limit to God's mercy in the remission of our sins. He will pardon every sin of ours, for the pardon of which we can rightly pray; but yet we must pray for it, and hope it upon no measures but those of our forgiveness.

3. To the question, whether of the parties must begin the peace? I answer, that both are bound; for, although

he that did the injury is bound in conscience and justice to go to him; whom he hath injured, and he is not a true penitent if he does not: yet, if the criminal does not come, the offended person must offer peace; he must go; or send to him. "If others begin the quarrel, do thou begin the peace," said Seneca. For sometimes the offender desires pardon, but dares not ask it; he begs it by interpretation, and tacit desire; consult, therefore, with his modesty, his infirmity, and his shame. He is more bound to do it, than thou art, yet thou canst better do it than he can; it may be an extreme shame to him; it is ever honourable to thee; and, therefore, upon all accounts, it is for thy advantage to make the offer.

I add also it is thy duty. I do not say, that in *justice* thou art bound; but in *charity* thou art, and in obedience to thy Lord. "If thy brother offend thee, go and tell him." Go thou, says Christ; for, by so doing, we imitate God, whom

though we have so often, so infinitely, offended; yet he thought thoughts of peace, and sent to us ambassadors of peace and ministers of reconciliation. It is no shame to thee to offer peace to thy offending brother when thy God did so to thee, who was greatly provoked by thee, and could as greatly have been revenged; and it is no disparagement, that thou shouldst desire the reconciliation with him, for whom Christ became a sacrifice, and to whom he offers, as he does to thee, the communion of his body and blood. Thou art, I say, bound in charity to thy brother's soul, whose repentance thou canst easily invite by thy kind offer; and thou makest his return easy, thou takest away his objection and temptation, thou securest thy own right better, and art invested in the greatest glory of mankind: thou dost the work of God, and the work of thy own soul: thou carriest pardon, and ease, and mercy with thee; and who would not run and strive to be first in

carrying a pardon, and bringing messages of peace and joyfulness? Consider, therefore, that death divides with you every minute; you quarrel in the morning, and, it may be, you shall die at night; run quickly and be reconciled, for fear your anger last longer than your life. It was a pretty victory which Euclid got of his angry brother, who being highly displeased, cried out: "Let me perish, if I be not revenged;" but he answered: "And let me perish, if I do not make you kind, and quickly to forget your anger." That gentle answer did it, and they were friends presently, and for ever after. It is a shame if we be outdone by heathens, and especially in that grace, which is the ornament and jewel of our religion; that is, in forgiving our enemies, in appeasing anger, in doing good for evil, in returning prayers for cursings, and gentle usages for rude treatments: this is the glory of Christianity, as Christianity is the glory of the world. I end this with

the advice of St. Bernard : “ Let every man, who desires to come worthily to the Sacrament of peace; the communion of Christ’s body, for the wrong that he does, be ready to ask pardon, and for the wrong that he receives, be ready to give pardon, and so Christ’s members will be in peace.”

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GOD regards not how much we do, but from how much it proceeds. He does much that loves much.

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PATIENTLY suffer that from others, which thou canst not mend in them, until God please to do it for thee; and remember that thou mend thyself, since thou art so willing, others should not offend in any thing.

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It is no great matter to live lovingly with goodnatured, with humble, and meek persons; but he that can do so with the froward, with the wilful and the ignorant, with the peevish and per-

verse, he only hath true charity; always remembering, that our true solid peace, the peace of God, consists rather in complying with others, than in being complied with; in suffering and forbearing, rather than in contention and victory.

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## PRAYER I.

O ETERNAL Jesus, who art made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, give me of thy abundant charity, that I may love the eternal benefit of the souls of my brethren with a true, diligent, and affectionate care and tenderness; give me a fellow-feeling of the calamities of others, a readiness to bear the burdens of others, aptness to forbear, wisdom to advise, counsel to direct, and a spirit of meekness and modesty, trembling at my infirmities, fearful in my brethren's dangers, and joyful in their restitution and securities. Lord, let all my actions be pious and

prudent, myself wise as a serpent, and innocent as a dove, and my whole life exemplary, and just, and charitable; that I may, like a lamp shining in thy temple, serve thee and enlighten others, and guide them to thy sanctuary, and that shining clearly, and burning zealously, when the bridegroom shall come to bind up his jewels, and beautify his spouse, and gather his saints together, I and all thy Christian people, knit in a holy fellowship, may enter into the joy of our Lord, and partake of the eternal refreshments of the kingdom of light and glory, where thou, O holy and eternal Jesu, livest and reignest in the excellencies of a kingdom, and the infinite durations of eternity. Amen.

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## PRAYER II.

O most blessed, most glorious Lord and Saviour Jesus, bē pleased to create in thy servant a hunger and thirst after the things of thy kingdom and the righ-



teousness of it, all thy holy graces, and all the holy ministries of grace ; that I may long for the bread of heaven, thirst after the fountain of salvation, and as the hart panteth after the brooks of water, so my soul may desire thee, O Lord. O kindle such a holy flame in my soul, that it may consume all that is before me ; that it may be meat and drink to me to do thy will. Grant, O blessed Jesus, that I may omit no opportunity of serving thee, of conversing with thee, of receiving thee. Let me not rest in the least and lowest measures of necessity, but pass on to the excellencies of love, and the transportations of an excellent religion, that there may remain in me no appetite for any thing but what thou lovest ; that I may have no satisfaction, but in a holy conscience ; no pleasure but in religion, no joy but in God ; and with sincerity and zeal, heartiness and ingenuity, I may follow after righteousness, and the things that belong unto my peace, until I shall arrive in the

land of eternal peace and praises, where  
thou livest and reignest for ever, world  
without end: Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

## FRIDAY BEFORE THE SACRAMENT.

### *Of Repentance preparatory to the Blessed Sacrament.*

It is an easy thing to say, that a man must repent before he communicates; so he must before he prays, before he dies, before he goes a journey: the whole life of a man is to be a continual repentance. But if so, then what particular is that which is required before we receive the holy Communion? For if it be an universal duty of infinite extent, or unlimited comprehension, then every Christian must always be doing some of the offices of repentance; but then, which are the peculiar parts and offices of this grace, which have any special and immediate relation to this solemnity? For, if there be none, the sermons of repentance are nothing but

the general doctrine of a good life, but of no special efficacy in our preparation.

The answer to this will explicate the intricacy, and establish the measures of our duty in this proper relation in order to this ministry.

1. The holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper does not produce its intended effect upon an unprepared subject. He that receives Christ must, in great truth, be a servant of Christ. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is the Christian sacrifice; and though the Lamb of God is represented in a pure oblation, yet we must bring something of our own; our lusts must be crucified; our passions brought in fetters, bound in chains, and laid down at the foot of the throne of God. When a sinner comes with a penitential soul, with a holy sorrow, and with holy purposes, then no oblation shall be more pleasing, no guest more welcome, no sacrifice more accepted. The Sacrament is like the word of God; if you receive it worthily, it will do you

good; if unworthily, it will be your death and your destruction.

Every time we receive the holy Sacrament, all our duties are summed up. We make new vows; we chastise our negligence; we mend our pace; we actuate our holy purposes, and make them stronger; we enter upon religion as if we had never done any thing before; we bring again our first penitential heats; and, as when we pray, and pray long, our devotion slackens, and our attention becomes trifling, and by wandering thoughts we are gone very far from the observation of the offices; the good man that ministers calls out to us, "Let us pray," and then the wandering thoughts run home; then we are troubled that we have lost so much of our prayers as we have not attended to; then we begin again, and pray the more passionately, by how much we observe ourselves to have been more negligent before. If God did not particularly call upon us by these religious necessities,

and stop us by the solemn return of the Sacrament, and stir up our fires, and remind us of our duty, and make actual seasons and opportunities for actual and great attendances on religion; if God did not make some days, and some necessities, and some opportunities for heaven; the soul and her interest would not be at all regarded. For this life is the day for the body, and our needs do indeed require so much attendance, and employ so much of our affections, and spend so much of our time, that it is necessary some abstractions and separations of time and offices be made.

Repentance, which is the duty of our life, and dispersed over all the parts and periods of it, like the waters in the first creation upon the face of the whole earth, is gathered together against the day of the Lord's Communion as into a congregation of penitential waters. Then you are to mourn for your sins, and to resolve against them; then you are to remember what vows you have already

made and broken, how often you have prevaricated in your duty, and by what temptation you are used to fall; then you are to renew the strength of your purposes, to fortify your tenderest part, and to cut off all advantages from the enemy; then you must prune your vine, and make the branches bleed; then the bridegroom comes, and you must trim your lamp, and adorn it with the culture of religion; that is, against the day of Communion, you must sum up all the parts of your repentance; for the Sacrament is a summary of all the mysteries, and all the duty of the whole religion of a Christian.

But our enquiry must be yet a little more particular. There are some actions of repentance, which must be finished and made perfect before we receive the holy Communion; and there are some which will be finishing all our life. Those parts of repentance, which must be finished before we approach the blessed Sacrament, are these.

1. We must have renounced, perfectly renounced all affections to sin, and firmly purpose to amend all, to sin no more, to lead a new life in all solid and material practices of virtue. Now, concerning our purposes of amendment, these things are to be taken care of, that they be made prudently, attentively, sincerely, and with intention upon a credible, possible, and designed effect. Cast about and see; have you promised what you are likely to perform, and do you intend it in good earnest, never to consent to a sin, in no circumstance, and for no argument, and by no temptation. For he that resolves never to commit that which he knows he shall commit, is like him who resolves he will never die : his vain resolution sets not his death back one hour.

2. He that in his preparation to the holy Communion purposes to live a holy life, must not judge of the goodness of his purposes by the present intendment, but by the consequent performance.



Now, by this consideration it is not intended that a man must defer his communion till he hath fully performed all his purposes of a holy life; for then he should never communicate till he dies; but by this we are advised to make such enquiry, and to use such cautions, and to require such indications of the reality of our purposes, as becomes wise, interested, and considering persons.

This is it that makes our communions have so little fruit. Men resolve to be good, and then communicate; they resolve they will hereafter, but they are not yet, and yet they will communicate; they resolve, and think no more of it, as if performance were no part of the duty and the obligation. In such cases it is not good to be hasty, for a little stay will do better than twenty arguments to enforce your purpose. You must make new resolutions, and re-enforce your old; but if you have already tried, and have found your purposes to be easily untwisted, and that, like the

scenes at masques, they were only for that show, to serve at that solemnity; learn to be more wary and more afraid the next time. The first folly was too bad, but to do so often is intolerable. But here are two cases to be resolved: Question 1.—“ But of what nature and extent must our preparatory resolution be? Must we resolve against all sin, or against some kinds only? If only against some sorts, then we are not clean all over. If against all, then we find it impossible for us to perform it; and then either it is not necessary to resolve, or not necessary to perform, or not necessary to communicate.” I answer,—it is one thing to say, I shall never fall, I shall never be mistaken, I shall never be surprised, or I shall never slacken my watchfulness and attention; and another thing to resolve against the love and choice of every sin. It is not always in our powers to avoid being surprised, or being deceived, or being dull and sleepy in our carefulness and

watches. Every good and well-meaning Christian cannot promise to himself security, but he may be tempted, or overpressed with a sudden fear when he cannot consider, and be put sometimes to act before he can take counsel; and though there is no one sin we do, but we do it voluntarily, and might escape it, if we would make use of the grace of God; yet the inference cannot run forth to all; we cannot, therefore, always escape all; any one we can, but not every one. Thus, therefore, he that means to communicate worthily, must resolve against every sin; the greatest and the least; that is, he must resolve never to commit any sin, concerning which he can deliberate; and he must resolve so to stand upon his guard, that he may not frequently be surprised; he must use prayer against all, and prudent caution in his whole conversation, and all the instruments of grace for the destruction of the whole body of sin; and though in this valley of tears there

are but few so happy souls as to triumph over all infirmities; we know of none; and if God hath any such on earth; they are peculiar jewels, kept in undiscerned cabinets; yet all that intend to serve God heartily; must aim at a return to that state of innocence, to the possibility of which Christ hath as certainly recovered us, as we lost it by our own follies and the sin of Adam; that is, we must continually strive, and every day get ground of our passions, and grow in understanding and the fear of God, that we be not so often deluded, nor in so many things be ignorant, nor be so easily surprised, nor so much complain of our weakness, nor the imperfection of our actions be in so many instances unavoidable. But in the matters of choice, in voluntary and deliberate actions, we must resolve not to sin at all. In these things we must be more than conquerors.

He that intends worthily to communicate, before his coming must quit all

those states of evil by which, so long as he dwells, he cannot stand uprightly. For to resolve against all sin, and yet to retain that temptation which hath been to this time stronger than all our resolutions, is to abide in the midst of a torrent, against which you cannot swim, and yet resolve never to be drowned. There is no dallying in this case; he that will not throw out the bondwoman and her son; he that will still retain the concubine, let him resolve what he will, and will what he is commanded, and profess what he purposes; his profession is nothing but words, and his resolutions will prove as unstable as the thinnest air, which is not able to support a fly, unless with her wings she fans it into an accidental thickness.

This may seem the hardest commandment of Christianity; and Christ calls it a "cutting off the right hand, and plucking out the right eye;" as if it were the greatest violence of the world. Indeed it is oftentimes a great inconve-

nience to our affairs and fortune ; for it may be, he, by whom we live, is he by whom we sin, and we cannot eat but we must be in danger ; but it must be remembered that it is a question of souls, and no interest can be laid in balance against a soul ; it is moments against eternity, money against heaven, life eternal against a little pension, and, therefore, this precept of pulling out the right eye is very easy when it is made the price or instrument of avoiding eternal torments ; a man had better pull his heart out than nurse a lust, by which he shall die for ever.

But then next to this it is considerable, that this precept of pulling out the right eye, that is, removing the next occasion of sin, is so far from being an hard commandment, that it is perfectly complying with our infirmities, and a securing of our greatest interests ; by this he conducts us tenderly, because we have no strength. For if Christ had commanded his disciples to dwell in

danger that they might triumph more gloriously, we had reason to suspect ourselves and to tremble under the load of the imposition, but Christ knew it would never consist with our safety, and never conduce to his Father's glory; therefore Christ bids us to avoid the occasion. If you cannot with water quench your fire, take the wood from under it. I only add one general advice, which will fit all sorts of persons that desire truly to serve God, and to arrive at an excellent state of virtue; although they live in the world, and are engaged by their duty and relations to many secular diversions, yet as they must do what they can to change these into religion, and into some good thing one way or other; so by these difficulties and diversions they will find it to be impossible that they should do any thing that is greatly good, unless they cut off all superfluous company, and visits, and amusements. That which is necessary is too much; and if it were not neces-

sary it would not be tolerable, but that which is more than needs is a mill-stone about the neck of religion, and makes it impossible to be excellently virtuous.

Question 2.—How far must we have proceeded in our general repentance and emendation of our lives before we communicate?

To this I answer, That no man is fit to communicate, but he that is fit to die; that is, he must be in the state of grace, and he must have trimmed his lamp; he must stand readily prepared by a state of repentance, and against the solemn time; he must make that state more actual and his graces operative.

Now, in order to this, it is to be considered that preparation to death hath great latitude; and not only he is fit to die, who hath attained to the fulness of the stature of Christ, to a perfect man in Christ Jesus; but every one who hath renounced his sin with heartiness and sincerity, and hath begun to mortify it.

The best and severest persons do in



the greatest parts of their spiritual life, complain of their imperfect state, and feel the load of their sins, and apprehend with trembling the sad consequences of their sins, and every day contend against them, and forget all that is past of good actions done, and press forwards still to more grace, and are as hungry as if they had none at all; and those men, if they die, go to Christ, and shall reign with him for ever, and yet many of them go with a trembling heart; and though, considering the infinite obliquity of them, they cannot overvalue their sins; yet, considering the infinite goodness of God, and his readiness to accept it, they undervalue their repentance, and are safe in their humility and in God's goodness, when in many other regards, they think themselves very unsafe. Now, such men as these must not be as much afraid to communicate as they are afraid to die; but these and all men else must not communicate till they be in that

condition, that if they did die, it would go well with them. As there are great varieties and degrees of fitness to death, so also to the holy Sacrament; he that hath lived best hath enough to deplore when he dies, and causes enough to beg for pardon of what is past, and for aids in the present need; and when he does communicate, he hath, in some proportion, the same too; he hath causes enough to come humbly; to come as did the publican, and to say as did the centurion, "Lord, I am not worthy."

He that hath resolved against all sin; and yet falls into it regularly at the next temptation, is yet in a state of evil and unworthiness to communicate, because he is under the dominion of sin; he obeys it, though unwillingly; that is, he grumbles at his fetters, but still he is in slavery and bondage. But if, having resolved against all sin, he delights in none, deliberately chooses none, is not so often surprised, grows stronger in grace, and is mistaken but

seldom, and repents when he is, and arms himself better, and watches more carefully against all, and increases still in knowledge; whatever imperfection is still adherent to the man unwillingly, does, indeed, allay his condition, and is fit to humble and cast him down; but it does not make him unworthy to communicate, because he is in the state of grace; he is in the Christian warfare, and is on God's side; and the holy Sacrament, if it have any effect at all, is certainly an instrument or a sign in the hands of God to help his servants, to enlarge his grace, to give more strengths, and to promote them to perfection.

In fine, it was the general doctrine of the holy fathers, and the public practice of the primitive church, that no impenitent person should come to these divine mysteries. "For this divine Sacrament is not to be eaten with confidence and boldness, but with fear and all manner of purity," saith St. Chrysostom, "for

impudence in these approaches will certainly slay the souls. For this is the body, whither none but eagles are to gather; because they ought to be sublime and elevated souls, such which have nothing of earthliness in them, that do not sit and prey upon the ground, that are not immersed in the love of creatures, but such whose flight is towards heaven, whose spirit does behold the Sun of Righteousness with a penetrating contemplation and piercing eyes; for this is the table of eagles and not of owls;" and, therefore, this Saint complains of some "who did approach to the Eucharist as it were by chance, or rather by custom and constraint of laws, rather than by argument and choice. In whatsoever estate their souls are, they will partake of these mysteries, because it is Lent, or because it is the feast of the Epiphany; but certain it is, that it is not the time which puts us into a capacity of doing this action. For it is not Lent, nor the Epiphany which

makes us worthy to approach to the Son of God ; but the sincerity and purity of the soul. With this come at any time ; but without this, never."

Having established this great general measure of preparation, it will not be very difficult to answer that great question often disputed amongst spiritual persons, viz.—

But how often is it advisable that a good man should communicate ? Once in a year, or thrice, or every month, or every fortnight—every Sunday, or every day ?

This question hath troubled very many ; but to little purpose. For it is all one as if it were asked : " How often should a healthful man eat ? or he that hath infirmities take physic ? " And if any man should say that " A good man should do well to pray three times a day," he said true. And yet it were better to pray five times, and better yet to pray seven times : but if he does, yet he must leave spaces for other duties.

But his best measure for public and solemn prayer, is the custom of the church in which he lives; and for private he can take no measures but his own needs, and his own leisure, and his own desires, and the examples of the best and devoutest persons in the same circumstances. And so it is in frequenting the holy Communion. The custom of the church may be his usual measure; but if he be a devout person, the spirit of devotion will be his certain measure; and although that will consult with prudence and reasonable opportunities, yet it consults with nothing else, but communicates by its own heights and degrees of excellency.

We find this question thus determined by St. Chrysostom: "There are some living in desarts, who receive but once in a year, or it may be once in two years. What then? whom shall we account best of? them that receive but once, or that receive but seldom, or that receive frequently? Neither one nor

the other ; but them that communicate with a sincere conscience, with a pure heart, and an unreprouable life. They that are so, let them always communicate ; and they that are not so, let them not approach so much as once, because they do nothing but draw upon themselves the judgments of God, and make themselves worthy of condemnation."

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Begin every day to repent. Not that thou shouldst at all defer it, or stand at the door ; but because all that is past ought to seem little to thee, because it is so in itself. Begin the next day with the same zeal, and the same fear, and the same humility as if thou hadst never begun before.

Entertain the same opinions and thoughts of thy sin, and of thy present state, as thou wilt in the days of sorrow. Thou wilt then think thyself very miserable, and very foolish, for neglecting one hour, and one day of thy salvation. Think so now, and thou wilt be more

provident of thy time and of thy talents : for there will a time come, when every careless man shall desire the respite of one hour for prayer and repentance, and I know not who will grant it. Happy is he that so lives, that in the day of death he rejoices and is not amazed.

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## PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and eternal God, the Fountain of all virtue, the support of all holy hopes, the Author of pardon, of life, and of salvation; thou art the comforter of all that call upon thee : thou hast concluded all under sin, that thou mightest have mercy upon all. Look upon me, O God, and have pity on me, lying in my misery, in my shame, and in my sins, in the fear and guilt of thy wrath, and in the shadow of death. I am not worthy to look up to heaven; but be thou pleased to look down into the dust; let me not perish in my folly, or be consumed in thy heavy displeasure. Give



me time and space to repent, and give me powers of grace, and aids of thy Spirit; that as, by thy gifts and mercy I intend to amend whatsoever is amiss, so I may indeed have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same. Inspire me with the spirit of repentance and mortification, that I may always fight against my sins till I be more than conqueror. Support me with a holy hope: confirm me with an excellent, operative and un-reprovable faith; and enkindle a bright and a burning charity in my soul. Give me patience in suffering, severity in judging and condemning my sin, and in punishing the sinner; that judging myself I may not be condemned by thee; that, mourning for my sins, I may rejoice in thy pardon; that, killing my sin, I may live in righteousness; that, denying my own will, I may always perform thine, and, by the methods of thy Spirit, I may overcome all carnal and spiritual wickednesses, and walk in thy light, and delight in thy service, and perfect my

obedience, and be wholly delivered from my sin, and for ever preserved from thy wrath ; and at last pass on from a certain expectation to an actual fruition of the glories of thy kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen, Amen, Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

**SATURDAY BEFORE THE SACRAMENT.**

*Of our actual and ornamental Preparation to the reception of the blessed Sacrament.*

HE that is dressed by the former measures, is always worthy to communicate; but he that is always well vested will, against a wedding-day, be more adorned; and the five wise virgins that stood ready for the coming of the bridegroom, with oil in their lamps, and fire on their oil; yet, at the notice of his coming, trimmed their lamps and made them to burn brighter. Every worthy communicant must prepare himself by a holy life, by mortification of all his sins, by the acquisition of all Christian graces, and this is not the work of a day or a week; but by how much the more these things are done, by so much the better we are prepared.

When, therefore, the masters of spiritual life call upon us to set apart a day or two, or three, for preparation to this holy feast, they do not mean that any man, who on the Thursday is unfit and unworthy, should be fitted to communicate on Sunday; but that he should on those days try whether he be or no, and pass from one degree of perfection to a greater, from the less perfect to the more; for let us think of it as we please, there is no other preparation; and it might otherwise seem a wonder to us, why St. Paul, who particularly speaks of it, and indeed the whole New Testament, should say nothing of any particular preparation to this holy feast; but only gives us caution, that we do not receive it unworthily, but gives us no particular rule or precept but this one: "That a man should examine himself, and so let him eat." I say this might seem very strange; but that we find there is, and there can be, no worthy preparation to it but a life of holiness,

and “ that every one who names the Lord Jesus should depart from iniquity ;” and, therefore, that against the day of Communion there is nothing peculiarly and signally required, but to examine ourselves, to see if all be right in the whole; and what is wanting towards our proportion of perfection and ornament, to supply it.

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*Rules for Examination of our Consciences  
against the Day of our Communion.*

IN the days of your address, consider the greatness of the work you go about, that it is the highest mystery of the whole religion you handle; that it is no less than Christ himself in the Sacrament that you take; that as sure as any Christian does ever receive the Spirit of God, so sure every good man receives Christ in the Sacrament; that now every communicant does an act that will contribute very much to an happy or unhappy eternity; that this is the greatest thing, that God gives us in this world,

and if we do it well, it is the greatest thing we can do in the world; and, therefore, when we have considered these things in general, let us examine whether we be persons in any sense fitted to such glorious communications, and prepared by such dispositions, which the greatness of the mystery requires.

Next to this general consideration, let us examine ourselves, how we spend our time. Is it employed in an honest calling, in worthy study, in useful business, in something that is charitable, in any thing that is useful? But if we throw away great portions of it, of which we can give no sober account; although the law chastises us not, and appoints no guardians to conduct our estates, as it does to fools and madmen, yet we are like to fall into severer hands, and God will be angry. But they are very unfit to entertain Christ, who, when they have received his Sacrament, resolve to dwell in idleness and foolish divertise-

ments, and have no business but recreation. At the best it is but a suspicious state of life, that can give no wise account to God and the commonwealth.

Let us examine ourselves concerning the great and little accidents of our private intercourse and conversation in our family; especially between man and wife in the little quarrellings and accidental unkindnesses, wherein both think themselves innocent, and it may be both are to blame. If the matter be disputable, then do thou dispute it with thyself, or rather condemn thyself; for either in the thing itself, or in the misapprehension of the thing, or in the not suffering it, or not forgiving it, or not conducting it prudently, it is great odds but thou art to blame. These little rencounters between man and wife are great hindrances to prayer, as St. Peter intimates, and, by consequence, do infinitely indispose us to the greatest solemnity of prayer, the holy Sacrament; and, therefore, ought to be

strictly surveyed, and the principles rescinded, and the beginnings stopped, or else we shall communicate without fruit; things which no law condemns, but yet are of ill report, such as are sumptuous and expensive clothing, great feasts, fantastic following of fashions, inordinate merriments, living beyond our means; in these and the like we must take our measures by a proportion to the prudence and severity of the Christian religion, and by observation of the customs and usages of the best and wisest persons in every condition of men and women. For that we do "things," which are of good "report," is a precept of the apostle; and, as by little illnesses in the body, so by the smallest indispositions in the soul, if they be proceeded in, we may finish the method of an eternal death. And these things, although when they are argued may, in many particulars, by witty men, be represented in themselves as innocent, yet



they proceed from an evil and unsafe principle, and not from a spirit fitted to dwell with Christ, and live upon Sacraments and secret participations.

If on a Communion-day we need very much examination, we can make but little supply of those many defects, which it is likely a diligent inquiry will discover; and, therefore, it is highly advisable, that as we ought to repent every day, and not put it all off till the day of our Communion, or our death, so we should every day examine ourselves at the shutting in of the day or at our going to bed; for so St. Basil, St. Austin, and St. Chrysostom do advise. The oftener we recollect ourselves, the more weaknesses we shall observe, and the more faults correct, and watch the better, and repent the more perfectly and offend less, and be more prepared for death, and be more humble, and with ease prevent the contracting of evil habits, and interrupt the union of little sins into a chain of death, and more

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readily prevail upon our passions, and better understand ourselves, and more frequently converse with God, and oftener pray, and have a more heavenly conversation, and, in fine, be more fitted for a frequent and holy Communion.

The end of examination is, that we grieve for all our sins, that we resolve to amend all, that we actually watch and pray against all. Therefore it is necessary, that when we have examined against a Communion-day, we renew our resolutions of better obedience; and that we pray for particular strength against our failings.

If any passion be the daily exercise or temptation of our life, let us be careful to put the greatest distress upon that, and, therefore, against a Communion-day, do something in defiance and diminution of that; chastise it, if it hath prevailed; re-enforce thy resolutions against it, examine all thy aids, see what hath been prosperous, and

pursue that point; and if thou hast not at all prevailed, then know all is not well; for he communicates without fruit, who makes no progressions in his mortifications and conquest over his passions.

Upon our Communion-days, and days of preparation, let us endeavour to stir up every grace, which we are to exercise in our conversation, and thrust ourselves forward in zeal of those graces; that we begin to amend our lukewarmness, and repair our sins of omission. For this is a day of sacrifice; and every sacrifice must be consumed by fire; and, therefore, now is the day of improvement, and the proper season for the zeal of duty; and if upon the solemn day of the soul, we do not take care of omissions, and repair the great and little forgetfulnesses, and omissions of duty, we may all our lifetime abide in a state of lukewarmness, disimprovement, and indifference to this purpose.

Compare day with day, week with week, Communion with Communion, time with time, duty with duty, and see if you can observe any advantage, any ground gotten of a passion, any further degree of the spirit of mortification; for, by volatile, sudden, and transient flames, we can never guess steadily; but be sure never to think you are at all improved, unless you observe your defects to be fewer or lighter, or at least not to be the same, but of another kind and instance, against which you had not made particular provisions formerly; but now, upon this new observation and experience, you must.

If you find any thing yet amiss, or too suspicious, the reliques of the scattered enemy after a war, resolve to use some general instrument of piety or repentance, that may, by being useful in all the parts of your life and conversation, meet with every straggling irre-

gularity, and by perpetuity and an assiduous force clear the coast. Resolve to have the presence of God frequently in your thought. Or endeavour and resolve to bring it to pass, to have so great a dread and reverence of God, that you may be more ashamed, and really troubled and confounded to sin in the presence of God, than in the sight and observation of the best and severest man. Or firmly purpose in every thing which is not well ; not to stay a minute, but to repent instantly of it, severely to condemn it, and to do something at the first opportunity for amends ; or resolve against an instance of infirmity for some short, sure, and conquerable periods of time. By these and the like instruments, it will happen to the remains of sin as it did to the Egyptians ; what is left by the hail, the caterpillar will destroy ; and what the caterpillar leaves, the locusts will eat.

But if, at any Communion, and in

the use of these advices, you do not perceive any sensible progression in the spirit of mortification, or devotion, then be sure to be ashamed, and to be humbled for thy indisposition and slow progression in the discipline of Christ; and if thou beest humbled truly for thy want of improvement, it is certain thou hast improved. And if you come with fear and trembling, it is very probable you will come in the spirit of repentance and devotion.

These exercises and measures will not seem many, long, and tedious as the rules of art, if we consider that all are not to be used at all times, nor by every person; but are instruments fitted to several necessities, and useful when they can do good, and to be used no longer.

But if we would every day prepare for the day of death, or which is of like consideration, for the day of our Communion; if we would every night examine our past day, and set our things in order; if we would have a perpetual

intercourse and conversation with God, or, which is better than all examinations in the world, if we would actually attend to what we do, and consider every action, we should find, that upon the day of our Communion we should have nothing to do, but to renew our graces by prayer and exercises of devotion.

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HE that esteems his progress in religion to consist in exterior observances, his devotion will quickly be at an end. But to free ourselves of passions, is to lay the axe at the root of the tree, and the true way of peace.

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WATCH and resist the devil in all his temptations and snares; his chief designs are these: to hinder thy desire in good; to put thee by from any spiritual employment, from prayers especially, from the meditation of the passion, from the remembrance of thy sins, from humble confession of them, from speedy repentance, from the custody of thy senses

and of thy heart, from firm purposes of growing in grace, from reading good books, and frequent receiving the holy Sacrament.

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## PRAYERS.

HEAR my prayers, O Lord, and consider my desire; hearken unto me for thy truth and righteousness' sake. O hide not thy face from me, neither cast away thy servant in displeasure.

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GIVE unto me the spirit of prayer, frequent and fervent, holy and persevering, an unreprouable faith, a just and an humble hope, and a never-failing charity.

Hear my prayers, O Lord, and consider my desire.

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GIVE unto me true humility, a meek and a quiet spirit, a loving and a friendly, a holy and a useful conversation, bearing the burdens of my neighbours, de-



nying myself, and studying to benefit others, and to please thee in all things.

Hear my prayers, &c.

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GIVE me a prudent and a sober, a just and a sincere, a temperate and a religious spirit; a great contempt of the world, a love of holy things, and a longing after heaven, and the instruments and paths that lead thither.

Hear my prayers, &c.

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GRANT me to be thankful to my benefactors, righteous in performing promises, loving to my relatives, careful of my charges, to be gentle and easy to be entreated, slow to anger, and fully instructed and readily prepared for every good work.

Hear my prayers, &c.

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GIVE me a peaceable spirit, and a peaceable life, free from debt and deadly sin, grace to abstain from all appearances of evil, and to do nothing but

what is of good report, to confess Christ and his holy religion by a holy and obedient life, and a mind ready to die for him, when he shall call me, and assist me.

Hear my prayers, &c.

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GIVE to thy servant a watchful and an observing spirit, diligent in doing my duty, inflexible to evil, obedient to thy word, inquisitive after thy will, pure and holy thoughts, strong and religious purposes, and thy grace to perform faithfully what I have promised in the day of my duty, or in the day of my calamity.

Hear my prayers, &c.

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O TEACH me to despise all vanity; to fight the battles of the Lord manfully against the flesh, the world, and the devil; to spend my time religiously and usefully; to speak gracious words; to walk always as in thy presence; to pre-

serve my soul and body in holiness, fit for the habitation of the Holy Spirit of God.

Hear my prayers, &c.

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GIVE me a holy and a perfect repentance, a well-instructed understanding, regular affections, a constant and a wise heart, a good name, a fear of thy majesty, and a love of all thy glories above all the things in the world for ever.

Hear my prayers, &c.

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GIVE me spiritual wisdom, that I may discern what is pleasing to thee, and follow what belongs unto my peace, and let the knowledge and love of God, and of Jesus Christ our Lord, be my guide and my portion all my days.

Hear my prayers, &c.

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GIVE unto me holy dispositions, and an active industry in thy service, to redeem the time mispent in vanity; for thy pity's

sake take not vengeance of me, for my sins, but sanctify my soul and body in this life, and glorify them hereafter.

Hear my prayers, &c.

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Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

**SUNDAY.—SACRAMENT-DAY.**

*Of our comportment in, and after receiving,  
the blessed Sacrament.*

WHEN the day of the feast is come, lay aside all cares and impertinences of the world, and remember, that this is thy soul's day, a day of traffic and intercourse with heaven. Arise early in the morning. Give God thanks for the approach of so great a blessing. Confess thine own unworthiness to admit so divine a guest. Then remember and deplore thy sins, which have made thee so unworthy. Then confess God's goodness, and take sanctuary there, and upon him place thy hopes; and invite him to thee with renewed acts of love, of holy desire, of hatred to his enemy, sin. Make oblation of thyself wholly to be disposed by him, to the obedience of him, to his providence and possession,

and pray him to enter and dwell there for ever. And after this, with joy and holy fear, and the forwardness of love, address thyself to the receiving of him, to whom, and by whom, and for whom, all faith, and all hope, and all love in the whole catholic church, both in heaven and earth, is designed.

When the holy man stands at the table of blessing, and ministers the rite of consecration, then do as the angels do, who behold and love, and wonder that the Son of God should become food to the souls of his servants; that he, who cannot suffer any change or lessening, should be broken into pieces, and enter into the body to support and nourish the spirit, and yet, at the same time, remain in heaven, while he descends to thee upon earth, that he who hath essential felicity should become miserable and die for thee, and then give himself to thee for ever to redeem thee from sin and misery; that by his wounds he should procure health to thee; by his

affronts he should entitle thee to glory; by his death he should bring thee to life, and, by becoming a man, he should make thee partaker of the Divine nature. These are such glories, that although they are made so obvious, that each eye may behold them, yet they are also so deep that no thought can fathom them; but so it hath pleased him to make these mysteries to be sensible, because the excellency and depth of the mercy is not intelligible; that while we are ravished and comprehended within the infiniteness of so vast and mysterious a mercy. Yet we may be as sure of it as of that thing we see, and feel, and smell, and taste; but yet it is so great that we cannot understand it.

Dispute not concerning the secret of the mystery, and the nicety of the manner of Christ's presence; it is sufficient to thee, that Christ shall be present to thy soul, as an instrument of grace, as a pledge of the resurrection, as the earnest of glory and immortality,

and a means of many intermedial blessings, even all such as are necessary for thee, and are in order to thy salvation. And to make all this good to thee, there is nothing necessary on thy part but a holy life, and a true belief of all the sayings of Christ; amongst which indefinitely assent to the words of institution, and believe that Christ, in the holy Sacrament, gives thee his body and his blood. He that believes so much, needs not to enquire further, nor to entangle his faith by disbelieving his sense.

Fail not at this solemnity, according to the custom of pious and devout people, to make an offering to God for uses of religion and the poor according to thy ability. For when Christ feasts his body, let us also feast our fellow-members, who have right to the same promises, and are partakers of the same Sacrament, and partners of the same hope, and cared for under the same Providence, and descended from the same common parents, and whose Fa-



ther God is, and Christ is their elder brother.

As soon as ever you have taken the holy elements into your mouth and stomach; remember, that you have taken Christ into you, after a manner indeed which you do not understand, but to all purposes of blessing and holiness, if you have taken him at all. And now consider, that he who hath given you his Son, with him will give you all things else; therefore represent to God, through Jesus Christ, all your needs, and the needs of your relatives; signify to him the condition of your soul; complain of your infirmities; pray for help against your enemies; tell him of your griefs; represent your fears, your hopes, and your desires. But it is also the great sacrifice of the world, which you have then assisted in and represented; and now you, being joined to Christ, are admitted to intercede for others, even for all mankind, in all necessities, and in all capacities; pray, therefore, for all

for whom Christ died ; especially for all that communicate that day, for all that desire it ; that their prayers and yours, being united to the intercession of your Lord, may be holy and prevail. After you have given thanks, and finished your private and the public devotions, go home ; but do not presently forget the solemnity, and sink from the sublimity of devotion and mystery into a secular conversation, like a falling star, from brightness into dirt. They that, as soon as the office is finished, part with Christ, and carry their mind away to other interests, have a suspicious indifferency to the things of God. He that considers the advantages of prayer, which every faithful soul hath upon a Communion-day, will not easily let them slip ; but tell all his sad stories to his Lord, and make all his wants known ; and, as Jacob to the angel, will not let him go till he hath given a blessing.

After all this, it is advised by the guides of souls, wise men and pious,

that all persons should communicate very often, even as often as they can without excuses or delays. Every thing that puts us from so holy an employment, when we are moved to it, being either a sin or an imperfection, an infirmity or indevotion, and an inactiveness of spirit. All Christian people must come; they, indeed, that are in the state of sin must not come so, but yet they must come. First, they must quit their state of death, and then partake of the bread of life. They that are at enmity with their neighbours must come; that is no excuse for their not coming; only they must not bring their enmity along with them, but leave it, and then come. They that have variety of secular employment must come, only they must leave their secular thoughts and affections behind them, and then come and converse with God. If any man be well grown in grace, he must needs come, because he is excellently disposed to so holy a feast; but he that is but in

the infancy of piety had need to come; that so he may grow in grace. The strong must come, lest they become weak, and the weak, that they may become strong. The sick must come to be cured, the healthful to be preserved. They that have leisure must come, because they have no excuse; they that have no leisure must come hither, that by so excellent religion they may sanctify their business. The penitent sinners must come, that they may be justified; and they that are justified, that they may be justified still. They that have fears and great reverence to these mysteries, and think no preparation to be sufficient, must receive, that they may learn how to receive the more worthily; and they that have a less degree of reverence must come often to have it heightened; that as those creatures, that live amongst the snows of the mountains, turn white with their food and conversation with such perpetual whitenesses; so our souls may be trans-

formed into the similitude and union with Christ by our perpetual feeding on him, and conversation, not only in his courts, but in his very heart, and most secret affections, and incomparable purities.

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**VERY** often remember and meditate upon the wounds and stripes, the shame and the pain, the death and the burial, of our Lord Jesus; for nothing will more enable us to bear our cross patiently, injuries charitably, the labour of religion comfortably, and censuring words and detractions with meekness and quietness.

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**BLESSED** is he that understands what it is to love Jesus, and contends earnestly to be like him. Nothing else can satisfy or make us perfect. But be thou a bearer of his cross as well as a lover of his kingdom. Suffer tribulation for him, or from him, with the same spirit thou receivest consolation; follow him as

well for the bitter cup of his passion, as for the loaves; and remember, that if it be a hard saying: "Take up my cross and follow me," it is a harder saying: "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."

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## PRAYER I.

O KING of glory, Lord and Maker of the world, thou art a God knowing all things and all thoughts, even long before they are; be thou present with us in this religious solemnity, calling upon thee. Deliver me from the shame of my sins, from the corruption and evil inclinations that attend them, and from all the evils that may justly follow them. Cleanse my will and my understanding from all evil lusts, from the deceits of the world, from the violence and snares of the devil, from all guile and hypocrisy, from every evil word and work, that I may serve thee faithfully, worship thee religiously, and pray unto thee acceptably. Have mercy upon me, thy

unworthy servant, who, with a hungry and thirsty soul, come to be refreshed and comforted by the divine nutriment of thy holy body and blood. Pity my infirmities, despise not my unworthiness, curse not my follies, and take not from thy servant thy grace and the light of thy divine countenance, but according to the multitude of thy great mercies, do away all mine offences, that, without self-condemnation, I may appear before thy glory, covered with the veil of Jesus, adorned with the robe of his righteousness, and illustrated with the brightness of thy divine Spirit; that I may live by thy grace, and feel thy mercy and pardon in this world and in the world to come, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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## PRAYER II.

O LORD God, our Creator, who hast given us life and being, and hast shown unto us the way of salvation, vouch-

safing to us the revelation of heavenly mysteries, and hast commended to us this service in the power of the Holy Ghost, and obedience of the Lord Jesus; be thou well pleased, O Lord, with this our service and duty; and grant, that with a holy fear, and a pure conscience, we may finish this service, presenting a holy sacrifice, holily unto thee, that thou mayest receive it in heaven; that it may be sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and be accepted in the Lord Jesus; that we being adopted into the society and participation of his holiness and sufferings, admitted to his service, incorporated to his body, united to his purity, made partakers of his intercession, pardoned by his mercy, sanctified by his grace, confirmed by his strength, professing his religion, believing in his word, hoping in his promises, and keeping all his commandments, may receive the reward of faithful and wise stewards in the day of thy righteous judgment. Grant this, O God, for his sake, who



is the food of our souls, and the joy of our hearts, the object of our faith and hope, and the great example of charity and all excellencies, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

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*Another Prayer that may be used upon the Morning of the Communion, by those whose Lives have been irregular.*

O BLESSED Lord, our gracious Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus, King of kings, and Lord of lords, thou art fairer than the children of men; upon thee the angels look, and behold, and wonder. What am I, O Lord, that thou who fillest heaven and earth shouldst descend and desire to dwell with me, who am nothing but folly and infirmity, misery and sin, shame and death?

I confess, O God, that when I consider thy greatness and my nothing, thy purity and my uncleanness, thy glory and my shame; I see it to be infinitely un-

reasonable and presumptuous, that I should approach to thy sacred presence, and desire to partake of thy Sacraments, and to enter into thy grace, and to hope for a part of thy glory. But when I consider thy mercy and thy wisdom, thy bounty and thy goodness, thy readiness to forgive and thy desires to impart thyself unto thy servants, then I am lifted up with hope; then I come with boldness to the throne of grace.

It was never heard, O Lord, from the beginning of the world, that thou didst ever despise him that called upon thee, or forsake any man that abides in thy fear, or that any person who trusted in the Lord was ever confounded. But if I come to thee I bring an unworthy person to be united unto thee; if I come not, I shall remain unworthy for ever. I know, O God, I know my sins have separated between me and my God; but thy love and thy passion, thy holiness and thy obedience hath reconciled us; and though my sins deter me, yet

they make it necessary for me to come; and though thy greatness amazes me, yet it is so full of goodness that it invites me.

O, therefore, blessed Saviour, who didst for our sakes take upon thee our passions and sensibilities, our weaknesses and our sufferings, and so art become a merciful High Priest, and pitiful to our infirmities; be pleased to receive a weary sinner, an overburdened conscience, an afflicted, polluted soul, into thy care and conduct, into thy custody and cure. I know that a thousand years of tears and sorrow, the purity of angels, the love of saints, and the humiliation of the greatest penitent is not sufficient to make me worthy to dwell with thee, to be united to thy infinity, to be fed with thy body and refreshed with thy purest blood. But what I cannot be of myself let me be made by thee. I come to thee wounded, and bruised, and bleeding, for thou art my physician; arise then, with healing in thy wings.

I am thirsty and faint: as the hart longeth after the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after thee, O God; thou art the eternal Fountain, from whence spring the waters of comfort, and salvation. O let virtue go forth from thee and heal all my sickness; do thou appear to my soul in these mysteries; heal my sores, purify my stains, enlighten my darkness. O Jesus, be a Saviour unto me, and let this Sacrament be a savour of life, and thy holy body the bread of life, and thy precious blood the purifier of my sinful life. Grant I may receive these divine mysteries for the amendment of my life, and the defence against my sins; for the increase of virtue, and the perfection of my spirit. Grant that I may, from thee thus sacramentally communicated, derive prevailing grace for the amendment of my life, spiritual wisdom for the discerning the ways of peace, the spirit of love, and the spirit of purity, that in all my life I may walk

worthy of thy gracious favours which thou givest to me unworthy; that I may do all my works in holiness and right intention, that I may resist every temptation, with a never-fainting courage, and a caution never surprised, and a prudence never deceived.

Blessed Saviour, I come to thee upon thy invitation and thy commandment. O let me never go from thee any more, but enter into my heart, feed me with thy word, sustain me with thy spirit, refresh me with thy comforts, and be thou my wisdom and my righteousness, my sanctification and redemption; let me receive this holy nutriment as the earnest of an eternal inheritance, as a defence against all spiritual danger, for the eviction of all the powers of the enemy, as an incentive of holy love, and a strengthening of my faith, for the increasing of a holy hope, and the consummation of a heavenly love, that thou being one with me, and I with thee, I may by thee be

gracious in the eyes of thy heavenly Father, and may receive my portion among the inheritance of sons, O eternal and most gracious Saviour and Redeemer Jesus. Amen. Amen.

**SUNDAY EVENING. — COMMUNION-DAY.**

*A Prayer in behalf of our own Souls and  
all Christian People.*

**PRAISE** ye the Lord. I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright and in the congregation. He that hath made his wonderful works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and full of compassion; he hath given meat unto them that fear him; he will ever be mindful of his covenant. O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord, saying, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the calves of our lips; for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy. The Lord hath said, I will heal their

backslidings. I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away.

The poor shall eat and be satisfied; they shall praise the Lord that seek him; your heart shall live for ever; for he hath placed peace in our borders, and fed us with the flour of wheat.

For, from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, the name of the Lord shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto his name, and a pure offering; for his name shall be great among all nations.

Whoso is wise, he shall understand these things, and the prudent shall know them, for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein.

Glory be to the Father, &c.

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O most merciful and gracious God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, thou art the great lover of souls, and thou hast given thy holy Son



to die for our salvation, to redeem us from sin, to destroy the work of the devil, and to present a church to thee pure, and spotless, and undefiled; relying upon thy goodness, trusting in thy promises, and having received my blessed Lord into my soul, I humbly represent to thy divine Majesty the glorious sacrifice, which our merciful Saviour made of himself upon the cross, and by a never-ceasing intercession now exhibits to thee in heaven in the office of an eternal Priesthood in behalf of all that have communicated this day in the divine mysteries in all the congregations of the Christian world, and in behalf of all them that desire to communicate, and are hindered by sickness or necessity, by fear or scruple, or the sentence of their own consciences.

Give unto me, O God, and unto them a portion of all the good prayers which are made in heaven and earth; the intercession of our Lord, and the supplications of all thy servants; and unite us

in the bands of the common faith and a holy charity.

Give thy blessing to all Christian kings and princes; grant to them the spirit of mercy and justice, prudence and diligence, the favour of God and the love of their people, and grace and blessing that they may live at peace with thee and with one another, remembering the command of their Lord and King, the serene and reconciling Jesus.

Give an apostolical spirit to all ecclesiastical prelates and priests; grant to them zeal of souls, wisdom to conduct their charges, purity to become examples, that their labours and their lives may greatly promote the honour of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus. O grant unto thy flock to be fed with wise and holy shepherds, men fearing God and hating covetousness; free from envy and full of charity; that being burning and shining lights, men beholding their light may rejoice in that light, and glorify thee our Father which art in heaven.

Have mercy upon all states of men and women in the Christian church ; grant to every of them in their several station to live with so much purity and faith, simplicity and charity, justice and perfection, that thy will may be done in earth as in heaven.

Relieve and comfort all that are fallen into poverty and sad misfortunes ; comfort and support all that are sick, and deliver them from all their sorrows and all the powers of the enemy ; and let the spirit of comfort and patience, of holiness and resignation, descend upon all Christian people whom thou hast, in any instance, visited with thy rod.

I humbly present to thy divine Majesty this glorious sacrifice, which thy servants this day have represented upon earth in behalf of my dearest relations, (wife, children, husband, parents, friends, &c.) Grant unto them whatsoever they want, or wisely and holily desire. Keep them for ever in thy fear and favour, grant that they may

never sin against thee, never fall into thy displeasure, never be separated from thy love and from thy presence, but let their portion be in the blessing and in the service, in the love and in the kingdom of God for ever and ever.

Have mercy upon all strangers and aliens from the kingdom of thy Son; let the sweet sound of the gospel be heard in all the corners of the earth; let not any soul, the work of thy own hands, the price of thy Son's blood, be any longer reckoned in the portions of the enemy. Give thy grace speedily to all wicked persons, that they may repent and live well, and be saved; to all good people give an increase of gifts and holiness, and the grace of perseverance and Christian perfection.

For all mankind, whom I have, and whom I have not, remembered, I humbly represent the sacrifice of thy eternal Son, his merits and obedience, his life and death, his resurrection and ascension, his charity and intercession; pray-

ing to thee in virtue of our glorious Saviour, to grant unto us all the graces of an excellent and perfect repentance, an irreconcilable hatred of all sin, a great love of God, an exact imitation of the holiness of the ever-blessed Jesus, the spirit of devotion, conformable will and religious affections, an angelical purity and a seraphical love, thankful hearts, and joy in God ; and let all things happen to us all in that way and disposition as may promote thy greatest glory and our duty, our likeness to Christ and the honour of his kingdom, whom I adore and whom I love, and desire that I may still more and more love and love for ever. Amen. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

## MONDAY AFTER THE SACRAMENT.

IF thou meanest to be devout, and to enlarge thy religion, do it rather by increasing thy ordinary devotions, than thy extraordinary. For if they be not regular, but come by chance, they will not last long. But if they be added to your ordinary offices, or made to be daily, thy spirit will, by use and custom, be made tender, and not willing to do less.

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*A Prayer for the Grace of Humility.*

O HOLY and most gracious Master and Saviour, Jesus, who, by thy example and by thy precept, by the practice of a whole life and frequent discourses, didst command us to be meek and humble, in imitation of thy incomparable sweetness and great humility; be pleased to give me the grace, as thou hast given me the

commandment; enable me to do whatsoever thou commandest, and command whatsoever thou pleasest. O mortify in me all proud thoughts and vain opinions of myself; let me return to thee the acknowledgment and the fruits of all those good things thou hast given me, that by confessing I am wholly in debt to thee for them, I may not boast myself for what I have received; and for what I am highly accountable, and for what is my own, teach me to be ashamed and humbled, it being nothing but sin and misery, weakness and uncleanness. Let me go before my brethren, in nothing but in striving to do them honour, and thee glory; never to seek my own praise, never to delight in it, when it is offered; that despising myself I may be accepted by thee in the honours, with which thou shalt crown thy humble and despised servants, for Jesus's sake in the kingdom of eternal glory. Amen.

*A Prayer that may be added to our daily Devotions after having received the Sacrament.*

O BLESSED and eternal Jesus, who gavest thyself a sacrifice for our sins, thy body for our spiritual food, thy blood to nourish our spirits, who didst so love us, who were thine enemies, that thou desiredst to reconcile us to thee, and becamest all one with us, that we may live the same life, think the same thoughts, and be partakers of thy resurrection and immortality. Open every window of my soul, that I may be full of light, and may see the excellency of thy love, the merits of thy sacrifice, the bitterness of thy passion, the glories and virtues of the mysterious Sacrament. Lord, let me ever hunger and thirst after this instrument of righteousness, let me have no relish of the unsatisfying delights of things below, but let my soul dwell in thee; let me for ever receive thee spiritually, and very fre-



quently communicate with thee sacramentally, and imitate thy virtues piously and strictly, and dwell in the pleasures of thy house eternally. Lord, thou hast prepared a table for me; let that holy Sacrament of the Eucharist be to me a defence and shield, a nourishment and medicine, life and health, a means of sanctification and spiritual growth, that having received the body of my blessed Lord, I may be one with his mystical body, and of the same Spirit, united with indissoluble bonds of a strong faith, and a holy hope, and a never-failing charity, that from this veil I may pass into the visions of eternal clarity, from eating thy body to beholding thy face in the glories of thy everlasting kingdom, O blessed and eternal Jesus. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

## TUESDAY AFTER THE SACRAMENT.

HE that will be blessed in his prayers, must make his prayers his rule. All our duty is there set down, because in all our duty we beg the divine assistance; and remember, that you are bound to do all those duties, for the doing of which you have prayed for the divine assistance.

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*Prayer for the Holy Spirit to enable us to perform our Duty.*

O ETERNAL God, whose counsels are in the great deep, and thy ways past finding out; thou hast built our faith upon thy promises, our hopes upon thy goodness, and hast described our paths between the waters of comfort and the dry barren land of our own duties and affections; we acknowledge that all our comforts derive from thee, and to ourselves we owe all

our shame and confusions. Give me the assistances of the Holy Ghost to help me in performing my duty; and give me those comforts and visitations of the Holy Ghost, which thou, in thy infinite and eternal wisdom, knowest most apt and expedient to encourage my duties, to entertain my hopes, to alleviate my sadnesses, to refresh my spirits, and to endure my abode and constant endeavours in the strictnesses of religion and sanctity. Lead me, O God, from grace to grace, from imperfection to strength, from acts to habits, from habits to confirmation in grace, that I may also pass into the regions of comfort, receiving the earnest of the Spirit, and the adoption of sons, till I be consigned to glory, and enter into the possession of the inheritance which we expect in the kingdom of thy Son, and in the fruition of the felicities of thee, O gracious Father, God eternal. Amen.

O ETERNAL God, merciful and gracious, vouchsafe thy favour and thy blessing to thy servant; let the love of thy mercies, and the dread and fear of thy majesty, make me careful and inquisitive to search thy will, and diligent to perform it, and to persevere in the practices of a holy life, even till the last of my days. Keep me, O Lord, for I am thine by creation; guide me, for I am thine by purchase; thou hast redeemed me by the blood of thy Son; and loved me with the love of a father, for I am thy child by adoption and grace; let thy mercy pardon my sins, thy providence secure me from the punishments and evils I have deserved, and thy care watch over me, that I may never any more offend thee; make me, in malice, to be a child, but in understanding piety, and the fear of God, let me be a perfect man in Christ, innocent and prudent, readily furnished and instructed to every good work. Let thy anger never rise against me, but thy rod gently correct my follies, and guide me in thy

ways, and thy staff support me in all sufferings and changes. Preserve me from great violences of fortune and sudden surprises; keep all my senses entire till the day of my death, and let my death be neither sudden, untimely, nor unprovided; let it be after the common manner of men, having in it nothing extraordinary, but an extraordinary piety and the manifestation of thy great and miraculous mercy.

Let no riches make me ever forget myself, no poverty ever make me to forget thee; let no hope or fear, no pleasure or pain, no accident without, no weakness within, hinder or discompose my duty, or turn me from the ways of thy commandments. O let thy Spirit dwell with me for ever, and make my soul just and charitable, full of honesty, full of religion, resolute and constant in holy purposes, but inflexible to evil. Make me humble and obedient, peaceable and pious; let me never envy any man's good, nor deserve to be despised myself;

and if I be, teach me to bear it with meekness and charity.

Give me a tender conscience ; a conversation discreet and affable, modest and patient, liberal and obliging ; a body chaste and healthful, competency of living according to my condition, contentedness in all estates, a resigned will and mortified affections ; that I may be as thou wouldst have me, and my portion may be in the lot of the righteous, in the brightness of thy countenance, and the glories of eternity. Amen.

Holy is our God. Holy is the Almighty. Holy is the Immortal. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth, have mercy upon me.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

## WEDNESDAY AFTER THE SACRAMENT.

BE not troubled nor faint in the labours of mortification, and the austerities of repentance; for in hell one hour is more intolerable, than a hundred years in the house of repentance; and try, for if thou canst not endure God punishing thy follies gently for awhile to amend thee, how wilt thou endure his vengeance for ever to undo thee?

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*A Prayer for godly Sorrow, and Grace  
to strive against Sin.*

O ETERNAL God, gracious and merciful, the fountain of pardon and holiness, hear the cries and regard the supplications of thy servant. I have gone astray all my days, and I will for ever pray unto thee, and cry mightily for pardon. Work in thy servant such a sorrow, that may be deadly unto the whole body of

sin, but the parent of an excellent repentance. O suffer me not any more to do an act of shame; nor to undergo the shame and confusion of face, which are the portion of the impenitent and persevering sinners at the day of sad accounts. I humbly confess my sins to thee; and while I mourn for them, let the angels rejoice; and while I am killing them by the aids of thy Spirit, let me be written in the book of life, and my sins be blotted out of the black registers of death, that my sins being covered and cured, dead and buried in the grave of Jesus, I may live to thee, my God, a life of righteousness, and grow in it till I shall arrive at a state of glory.

Now, O my God, hear; now let me finish the work of a holy repentance. Let thy grace be present with me, that this day I may repent acceptably, and to-morrow, and all my days; not weeping over my returning sins, nor deploring new instances, but weeping bitterly for the old; loathing them infinitely, de-



nouncing war against them hastily, prosecuting that war vigorously, resisting them every hour, crucifying them every day, praying perpetually, watching assiduously, consulting spiritual guides and helps frequently, obeying humbly, and crying mightily, I may do every thing by which I can please thee; that I may be rescued from the powers of darkness, and the sad portions of eternity which I have deserved.

O give unto thy servant intentions so real, a resolution so strong, a repentance so holy, a sorrow so deep, a hope so pure, a charity so sublime, that no temptation or time, no health or sickness, no accident or interest may be able, in any circumstance of things or persons, to tempt me from thee and prevail. Work in me a holy and an irreprovable faith, whereby I may overcome the world, and crucify the flesh, and quench the fiery darts of the devil; and let this faith produce charity, and my sorrow cause amendment, and my fear produce

caution, and that caution beget a holy hope; let my repentance be perfect and acceptable, and my affliction bring forth joy and the pleasant fruit of righteousness. Let my hatred of sin pass into the love of God, and this love be obedience, and this obedience be universal, lasting, and perpetual; that I may rejoice in my recovery, and may live in health, and proceed in holiness, and abide in thy favour, and die with a blessing the death of the righteous; and at the day of judgment may have my portion in the resurrection of the just; and may enter into the joy of my Lord, to reap from the mercies of God in the harvest of a blessed eternity, what is here sown in tears and penitential sorrow; being pardoned, and accepted, and saved by the mercies of God in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

**THURSDAY AFTER THE SACRAMENT.**


**IN** all afflictions seek rather for patience than for comfort. If thou preservest that, this will return. Any man would serve God, if he felt pleasure in it always; but the virtuous does it when his soul is full of heaviness and regards not himself, but God, and hates that consolation that lessens his compunction; but loves any thing whereby he is made more humble.

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*A Prayer against Temptations.*

**O** GOD and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, thy name is great, thy essence is infinite, thy goodness is eternal, and thy power hath no limit; thou art the God and Lord of all, blessed for evermore; look down in mercy and compassion from thy dwelling, hear my prayers and supplications, and deliver

me from all temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Take not thy grace from me; let me never want thy help in my need, nor thy comfort in the day of my danger or calamity. Never try me beyond my strength, nor afflict me beyond my patience, nor smite me but with a father's rod. I have no strength of my own; thou art my confidence, my rock, and my strong salvation. Save me, O God, from the miseries of this world, and never let me suffer the calamities of the next. Rescue me from the evils I have done, and preserve me from the evils I have deserved; that living before thee, with a clean heart and undefiled body, and a sanctified spirit, I may, at the day of judgment be presented pure and spotless by the blood of the Lamb, that I may sing eternal hallelujahs in heavenly places to the honour of God our Saviour, who hath redeemed my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. Grant this in



the richness of thy mercy through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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O ETERNAL God, whose perfections are infinite, whose mercies are glorious, whose justice is severe, whose eyes are pure, whose judgments are wise; be pleased to look upon the infirmities of thy servant, and consider my weakness. Teach me, O Lord, to walk before thee in righteousness, perfecting holiness, in the fear of God. Give me an obedient will, a loving spirit, an humble understanding, watchfulness over my thoughts, deliberation in all my words and actions, well-tempered passions, and a great prudence, and a great zeal, and a great charity, -that I may do my duty wisely, diligently, holily. O let me be humbled in my infirmities, but let me be also safe from my enemies; let me never fall by their violence, nor by my own weakness; let me never be overcome by them, nor yet give myself up to folly and weak principles, to idleness, to se-

cure and careless walking ; but give me the strengths of thy Spirit, that I may grow strong upon the ruins of the flesh, growing from grace to grace, till I become a perfect man in Christ Jesus. O let thy strength be seen in my weakness; and let thy mercy triumph over my infirmities; pitying the condition of my nature, the infancy of grace, the imperfection of my knowledge, the transportations of my passion. Let me never consent to sin, but for ever strive against it, and every day prevail, till it be quite dead in me; that thy servant, living the life of grace, may at last be admitted to that state of glory, where all my infirmities shall be done away, and all tears be dried up, and sin and death shall be no more. Grant this, O most gracious God and Father, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

## FRIDAY AFTER THE SACRAMENT.

BE doing actions of religion as often as thou canst, and thy worldly pleasures as seldom, that if thou beest surprised by sudden death, it may be odds but thou mayest be taken at thy prayers.

He to whom all things are one, who draweth all things to one, and seeth all things in one, may enjoy true peace and rest of spirit.

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### *A Prayer for preservation from Sin.*

O ETERNAL God, who wert pleased in mercy to look upon us in our blood, to reconcile us when we were enemies, to forgive us in the midst of our provocations of thy infinite and eternal Majesty, finding out a remedy for us which mankind could never ask; even making an atonement for us by the blood of the everlasting covenant, and thy all-hallow-

ing and divinest Spirit; let thy graces so perpetually assist and encourage my endeavours, conduct my will, and fortify my intentions, that I may persevere in that holy condition, which thou hast put me in by the grace of the covenant, and the mercies of the holy Jesu. O let me never fall into those sins, and retire to that vain conversation, from which the eternal and merciful Saviour of the world hath redeemed me; but let me grow in grace, adding virtue to virtue, reducing my purposes to acts, and increasing my acts till they grow into habits, and my habits till they be confirmed, and still confirming them till they be consummated in a blessed and holy perseverance. Let thy preventing grace dash all temptations in their approach; let thy assisting grace enable me to resist them in the assault and overcome them in the fight, that my hopes be never discomposed, nor my faith weakened, nor my title and portion in the covenant be lessened; or if thou permittest me at any time to fall, (which



holy Jesu avert for thy mercy and compassion sake,) yet let me not sleep in sin, but recall me instantly by the clamours of a nice and tender conscience, and the quickening sermons of the Spirit, that I may never pass from sin to sin, from one degree to another, lest sin should get the dominion over me, lest thou be angry with me, and reject me from the covenant, and I perish. Purify me from all uncleanness, sanctify my spirit, that I may be holy as thou art, and let me never provoke thy jealousy, nor presume upon thy goodness, nor distrust thy mercies, nor defer my repentance, nor rely upon vain confidences; but that I may, by a constant, sedulous, and timely endeavour, make my calling and election sure, living to thee, and dying to thee, that having sown to the spirit, I may, from thy mercies reap in the spirit, bliss, and eternal sanctity, and everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, our hope, and our mighty and ever-glorious Redeemer. Amen.

*A Prayer for Heavenly-mindedness.*

O BLESSED Jesus, who art become to us the fountain of peace, and sanctity, of righteousness, and charity of life, and perpetual benediction, imprint in my spirit these glorious characters of Christianity; that by such excellent dispositions I may be consigned to the infinity of blessedness, which thou camest to reveal and minister, and exhibit to mankind. Give me great humility of spirit, and deny me not when I beg sorrow of thee, the mourning and sadness of a true penitent, that I may imitate thy excellences and conform to thy sufferings; make me meek, patient, indifferent, and resigned in all accidents, changes, and issues of divine providence. Mortify all inordinate anger in me, all wrath, strife, contention, murmurings, malice, and envy; and interrupt, and then blot out all peevish dispositions and morosities, all disturbances and un-

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evenness of spirit or of habit, that may hinder me in my duty. O teach me so to hunger and thirst after the ways of righteousness, that it may be meat and drink to me to do thy Father's will. Raise my affections to heaven and heavenly things, fix my heart there and prepare a treasure for me, which I may receive in the great communications of thy glory; and, in this sad interval of infirmity and temptations, strengthen my hopes and fortify my faith by such omissions of light and grace from thy Spirit, that I may relish those blessings which thou preparest for thy saints, with so great appetite, that I may despise the world and all its gilded vanities, and may desire nothing but the crown of righteousness, and the paths that lead thither, the graces of thy kingdom and the glories of it, that when I have served thee in holiness and strict obedience, I may reign with thee in the glories of eternity; for thou, O holy Jesus, art

our hope, and our life, and glory, our  
exceeding great reward. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

## SATURDAY AFTER THE SACRAMENT.

No man can always have the same spiritual pleasure in his prayers, for the greatest saints have sometimes suffered the banishment of the heart; sometimes are fervent, sometimes they feel a barrenness of devotion; for this spirit comes and goes. Rest, therefore, only in God, and in doing thy duty; and know, that if thou beest overjoyed to-day, this hour will pass away, and temptation and sadness will succeed.

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*A Prayer against weariness in well-doing.*  
O MY God, merciful and gracious, my soul groans under the loads of its own infirmity; when my spirit is willing, my flesh is weak, my understanding foolish and imperfect, my will peevish and listless, my affections wandering after strange objects, my fancy wild and un-

fixed, and all my senses minister to folly and vanity; and though they were all made for religion, yet they least of all delight in that. O my God pity me, and hear me when I pray, and make that I may pray acceptably. Give me a love to religion, an unwearied spirit in the things of God. Let me not relish or delight in the things of the world, in sensual objects and transitory possessions; but make my eyes look up to thee, my soul be filled with thee, my understanding employed in the meditation of thy law, all my powers and faculties of soul and body wholly serving thee, and delighting in such holy ministries.

O most gracious God, what greater favour is there than that I may, and what easier employment can there be than to pray to thee, to be admitted into thy presence and to represent our needs, and that we have our needs supplied only for asking and desiring passionately and humbly. But we rather

quit our hopes of heaven than buy it at the cheapest rate of humble prayer.

O relieve my spirit with thy graciousness, take from me all tediousness of spirit, and give me a laboriousness that will not be tired, a hope that shall never fail, a desire of holiness not to be satisfied till it possesses, a charity that will always increase; that I, making religion the business of my whole life, may turn all things into religion, doing all to thy glory, and by the measures of thy word and of thy Spirit, that when thou shalt call me from this deliciousness of employment, and the holy ministries of grace, I may pass into the employment of saints and angels, whose work it is with eternal joy and thanksgiving to sing praises to the mercies of the great Redeemer of men, Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and worship, all service and thanks; all glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.

O HOLY and immaculate Lamb of God, who wert pleased to suffer shame and sorrow, to be brought before tribunals, to be accused maliciously, betrayed treacherously, condemned unjustly, suffering the most severe inflictions which could be procured by subtle and extremest malice; teach me to apprehend the baseness of sin in proportion to the greatness of those calamities which my sin made it necessary for thee to suffer; that I may hate the cause of thy sufferings, and adore thy mercy, and imitate thy charity, and copy out thy patience and humility, and love thee to the utmost extent and degrees of my affections. Lord, what am I, that the eternal Son of God should suffer one stripe for me? But thy love is infinite; and how great a misery is it to provoke by sin so great a mercy, and despise so miraculous a goodness, and do fresh despite to the Son of God? But my sins are innumerable, and my infirmities are mighty. Merciful Jesu, pity me, for I am accused



by my own conscience, and am found guilty. But let thy innocence excuse me, the robes of thy righteousness clothe me, thy bondage set me free, and thy stripes heal me; that thou being my advocate, my physician, and my Lord, I may be adopted into the union of thy merits, and partake of the efficacy of thy sufferings and have my sins changed to virtues, and my thorns to rays of glory under thee, our head, in the participations of eternity; O holy and immaculate Lamb of God. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

## OCCASIONAL PRAYERS.

*A Form of Thanksgiving that may be used  
in all Sundays of the Year.*

O ETERNAL essence, Lord God, Father Almighty, maker of all things in heaven and earth, it is a good thing to give thanks to thee, O Lord, and to pay to thee all reverence, worship, and devotion, from a clean and prepared heart, and with an humble spirit to present a living and reasonable sacrifice to thy holiness and majesty; for thou hast given unto us, the knowledge of thy truth; and who is able to declare thy greatness, and to recount all thy marvellous works, which thou hast done in all the generations of the world?

O great Lord and Governor of all things, Lord and Creator of all things visible and invisible, who sittest upon the throne of thy glory, and beholdest the secrets of the lowest abyss and

darkness, thou art without beginning, uncircumscribed, incomprehensible, unalterable, and seated for ever unmoveable in thy own essential happiness and tranquillity; thou art the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is,

Our blessed and most gracious Saviour, our hope, the wisdom of the Father, the image of thy goodness, the word eternal, and the brightness of thy person, the power of God from eternal ages, the true light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world, the redemption of man, and the sanctification of our spirits; by whom,

The Holy Ghost descended upon the church; the Holy Spirit of truth, the seal of adoption, the earnest of the inheritance of the saints, the first-fruits of everlasting felicity, the life-giving power, the fountain of sanctification, the comfort of the church, the ease of the afflicted, the support of the weak, the wealth of the poor, the teacher of the doubtful, scrupulous, and ignorant,

the anchor of the fearful, the infinite reward of all faithful souls ; by whom all reasonable and understanding creatures serve thee, and send up a never-ceasing and a never-rejected sacrifice of prayer, and praises, and adoration.

All angels and archangels, all thrones and dominions, all principalities and powers, the cherubims with many eyes, and the seraphims covered with wings from the terror and amazement of thy brightest glory ; these and all the powers of heaven do perpetually sing praises and never-ceasing hymns, and eternal anthems to the glory of the eternal God, the almighty Father of men and angels.

Holy is our God ; holy is the Almighty ; holy is the Immortal ; holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth ; heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory. Amen. With these holy and blessed spirits I also, thy servant, O thou great lover of souls, though I be unworthy to offer praise to such a majesty ; yet out of my bounden duty

humbly offer up my heart and voice to join in this blessed choir, and confess the glories of the Lord. For thou art holy, and of thy greatness there is no end; and in thy justice and goodness thou hast measured out to us all thy works.

“O that men would, therefore, praise the Lord for his goodness, and declare the wonders that he hath done for the children of men.”

What shall I render to thy divine Majesty, O Lord God, for all the benefits thou hast done unto me? Thou art my Creator and my Father, my Protector and my Guardian. Thou hast been my Guide and my Teacher all my days. Thou hast clothed me and fed me, given me friends and blessed them; given me many days of comfort and health free from those sad infirmities, with which many of thy saints and servants are afflicted. Thou, O my Lord and Father, hast taken care of my soul, hast pitied my miseries, relieved and instructed my

ignorances; and though I have broken thy righteous laws and commandments; yet thou didst call me with the checks of conscience, with daily sermons and precepts of holiness, with fear and shame, with benefits and the admonitions of thy most Holy Spirit, by the counsel of my friends, by the example of good persons, with holy books and thousands of excellent arts.

I will give thanks unto the Lord with my whole heart, secretly among the faithful and in the congregation. For salvation belongeth unto the Lord, and thy blessing is upon thy servant. But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercies, and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple. For of thee, and in thee, and through and for thee, are all things. Blessed be the name of God from generation to generation. Amen.

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*Shorter devotions for Sunday Morning.*

O LORD God, Fountain of life, Giver of all good things, who givest to men the blessed hope of eternal life, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and hast promised thy Holy Spirit to them that ask him; be present with us this day, in the dispensation of thy holy word; grant that I, being preserved from all evil by thy power, and among the diversities of opinion and judgments in this world, from all errors and false doctrines, and led into all truth by the conduct of thy Holy Spirit, may for ever obey thy heavenly calling; that I may be, not only a hearer of the word of life, but a doer also of good works, keeping faith and a good conscience, living an unblamable life, usefully and charitably, religiously and prudently in all godliness and sobriety before thee our God, and before all the world, that at the end of my mortal life I may enter into the light and life of God, to sing praises and eternal hymns

to the glory of thy name in eternal ages,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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*A Prayer for the virtue of Religion and  
Devotion in holy Places.*

O GREAT God, and King of heaven and earth, thou that sittest between the cherubims, unmoved in the centre of thine own felicity and essential tranquillity, undisturbed in the great concussions and unquietness of the earth; give unto me thy servant, venerable and dreadful apprehensions of the sanctity and perfections of thy name and nature, which is great, wonderful, and holy. Teach me in all addresses of my devotion, and in all places appointed for thy service, by all reverence and holiness of soul and body to express the greatness of thy power and my weakness, the majesty of thy glory, and the unworthiness of my person, the distance of God and man, of finite and infinite, of Lord and servant; that the awfulness of thy dread majesty may check every unreve-



rent gesture and thought in me, and teach me to make approaches of humility and fear, that I, calling upon thy name according to my duties, and by the fear of thee being taught, to keep thy testimonies, and never to forget the law thou givest us, may be delivered from thy wrath and punishment, and at last praise thee upon thy holy hill in thine everlasting habitation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen..

In whose name I pray in the words which himself commanded, saying,...

Our Father, &c...

The grace, &c.

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*A Prayer for Sunday Evening.*

ALMIGHTY God, our glory and our hope, our Lord and Master, the Father of mercy and the God of all comfort, I humbly present to thee the sacrifice of a thankful spirit in a joyful acknowledgment of those infinite favours, by which thou hast supported my state, enriched my spirit, comforted my sor-

rows, relieved my necessities, blessed and defended my person, instructed my ignorances, and promoted my eternal interests. I praise thy name for that portion of thy holy word, of which thou hast made me a partaker this day. Grant that it may bring forth fruit unto thee and unto holiness in my whole life, to the glory of thy holy name, the edification of my brethren, and the eternal comfort of my soul in the day of our Lord Jesus.

Have mercy upon all that desire and upon all that need my prayers. Ease the pains of the sick, support the spirit of the disconsolate, hear the cries of orphans and widows in their calamity, and restore all that are oppressed to their rights, and sanctify to them all their wrongs; pity the folly, and pity the calamities of poor mankind; in mercy remember those that are appointed to die; comfort and support their spirits, perfect and accept their repentance, and receive the souls re-

turning unto thee, whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood.

Lord, pity and pardon, direct and bless, sanctify and save us all. Give repentance to all that live in sin, and perseverance to all thy sons and servants for his sake, who is thy beloved, and the foundation of all our hopes, our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus, to whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, praise and adoration, love and obedience, now and for evermore. Amen.

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*An Act of Intercession or Prayer for others,  
to be added to this or any other office, as  
our devotion, or duty, or their needs shall  
determine us.*

O God of infinite mercy, who hast compassion on all men, and relievest the necessities of all that call to thee for help, hear the prayers of thy servant, who is unworthy to ask any petition for himself, yet, in humility and duty, is bound to pray for others.

*For the Church.*

O LET thy mercy descend upon the whole church; preserve her in truth and peace, in unity and safety, in all storms, and against all temptations and enemies; that she, offering to thy glory the never-ceasing sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving, may advance the honour of her Lord, and be filled with his Spirit, and partake of his glory. Amen.

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*For the King.*

IN mercy remember the king; preserve his person in health and honour; his crown in wealth and dignity; his dominions in peace and plenty; the churches under his protection in piety and knowledge, and a strict and holy religion; keep him perpetually in thy fear and favour, and crown him with glory and immortality. Amen.

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*For the Clergy.*

REMEMBER them that minister about holy things; let them be clothed with

righteousness and sing with joyfulness.  
Amen.

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*For Wife or Husband.*

BLESS thy servant {my wife or husband] with health of body and of spirit. O let the hand of thy blessing be upon [his or her] head night and day, and support [him] in all necessities, strengthen [him] in all temptations, comfort [him] in all [his] sorrows, and let [him] be thy servant in all changes; and make us both to dwell with thee for ever in thy favour in the light of thy countenance, and in thy glory. Amen.

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*For our Children.*

BLESS my children with healthful bodies, with good understandings, with the graces and gifts of thy Spirit, with sweet dispositions and holy habits; and sanctify them throughout in their bodies and souls, and spirits, and keep them unblameable to the coming of the Lord Jesus. Amen.

*For Friends and Benefactors.*

BE pleased, O Lord, to remember my friends, all that have prayed for me, and all that have done me good. [*Here name such, whom you would especially recommend.*] Do thou good to them, and return all their kindness double into their own bosom, rewarding them with blessings, and sanctifying them with thy graces, and bringing them to glory.

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*For our Family.*

LET all my family and kindred, my neighbours and acquaintance, [*here name what other relations you please,*] receive the benefit of my prayers, and the blessings of God ; the comforts and supports of thy providence and the sanctification of thy Spirit.

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*For all in Misery.*

RELIEVE and comfort all the persecuted and afflicted ; speak peace to troubled consciences ; strengthen the weak ; confirm the strong ; instruct the ignorant ;

deliver the oppressed from him that spoileth him, and relieve the needy that hath no helper; and bring us all by the waters of comfort, and in the ways of righteousness, to the kingdom of rest and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

To God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; to the eternal Son that was incarnate and born of a virgin; to the Spirit of the Father and the Son, be all honour and glory, worship and thanksgiving, now and for ever. Amen.

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*Morning Prayer for ordinary Days.*

Most glorious and eternal God, Father of mercy, and God of all comfort, I worship and adore thee with the lowest humility of my soul and body, and give thee all thanks and praise for thy infinite and essential glories and perfections, and for the continual demonstration of thy mercies upon me, upon all mine, and upon thy holy catholic church. I ac-

knowledge, O God, that I have deserved the greatest of thy wrath and indignation; but thy mercy triumphing over thy justice and my sins, thou hast still continued to me life and time of repentance; thou hast opened to me the gates of grace and mercy; and perpetually callest upon me to enter in, and to walk in the paths of a holy life, that I might glorify thee, and be glorified of thee eternally.

Behold, O God, for this thy great and unspeakable goodness, for the preservation of me this night, and for all other thy graces and blessings, I offer up my soul and body, all that I am, and all that I have, as a sacrifice to thee, and thy service; humbly begging of thee to pardon all my sins, to defend me from all evil, to lead me into all good; and let my portion be amongst thy redeemed ones, in the gathering together of the saints, in the kingdom of grace and glory.

Guide me, O Lord, in all the changes



and varieties of the world; that in all that shall happen, I may have an evenness and tranquillity of spirit, that my soul may be wholly resigned to thy divinest will and pleasure, never murmuring at thy gentle chastisements and fatherly corrections; never waxing proud and insolent, though I feel a torrent of comforts and prosperous successes.

Fix my thoughts, my hopes, and my desires, upon heaven and heavenly things; teach me to despise the world, to repent me deeply for my sins; give me holy purposes of amendment and ghostly strength, and assistances to perform faithfully whatsoever I shall intend piously. Enrich my understanding with an eternal treasure of Divine truths, that I may know thy will; and thou who workest in us to will and to do of thy good pleasure, teach me to obey all thy commandments, to believe all thy revelations, and make me partaker of all thy gracious promises.

Teach me to watch over all my ways,

that I may never be surprised by sudden temptations or a careless spirit, nor ever return to folly and vanity. Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips, that I offend not in my tongue either against piety or charity. Teach me to think of nothing but thee, and what is in order to thy glory and service; to speak nothing but thee and thy glories, and to do nothing but what becomes thy servant, whom thy infinite mercy, by the graces of thy Holy Spirit, hath sealed up to the day of redemption.

Let all my passions and affections be so mortified and brought under the dominion of grace, that I may never, by deliberation and purpose, nor yet by levity, rashness, or inconsideration, offend thy divine Majesty. Make me such as thou wouldest have me to be; strengthen my faith, confirm my hope, and give me a daily increase of charity, that this day and ever I may serve thee according to all my opportunities and capacities,

growing from grace to grace, till at last, by thy mercies, I shall receive the consummation and perfection of grace, even the glories of thy kingdom, in the full fruition of the face and excellencies of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; to whom be glory and praise, honour and adoration, given by all angels, and all men, and all creatures, now, and to all eternity. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

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*Evening Prayer.*

O ETERNAL God, great Father of men and angels, who hast established the heavens and the earth in a wonderful order, making day and night to succeed each other, I make my humble address to thy divine Majesty, begging of thee mercy and protection this night and ever.

O Lord, pardon all my sins, my light and rash words, the vanity and impiety of my thoughts, my unjust and uncharitable actions, and whatsoever I have

transgressed against thee this day, or any time before. Behold, O God, my soul is troubled in the remembrance of my sins, in the frailty and sinfulness of my flesh exposed to every temptation, and of itself not able to resist any. Lord God of mercy, I earnestly beg of thee to give me a great portion of thy grace, such as may be sufficient and effectual for the mortification of all my sins, and vanities, and disorders; that as I have formerly served my lusts and unworthy desires, so now I may give myself up wholly to thy service, and the studies of a holy life. Blessed Lord, teach me frequently and sadly to remember my sins; and be thou pleased to remember them no more; let me never forget thy mercies, and do thou still remember to do me good. Teach me to walk always as in thy presence, ennoble my soul with great degrees of love to thee, and consign my spirit with great fear, religion, and veneration of thy holy name and laws; that it may become the great em-

ployment of my whole life, to serve thee, to advance thy glory, to root out all the accursed habits of sin; that in holiness of life, in humility, in charity, in purity, and all the ornaments of grace, I may by patience, wait for the coming of our Lord Jesus.

Teach me, O Lord, to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom; ever to remember my last end, that I may not dare to sin against thee. Let thy holy angels be ever present with me to keep me in all my ways from the malice and violence, of the spirits of darkness, from a sinful life, and from despair in the day of my death. Then, O brightest Jesu, shine gloriously upon me; let thy mercies and the light of thy countenance sustain me in all my agonies, weaknesses, and temptations. Give me opportunity of a prudent and spiritual guide, and of receiving the holy sacrament, and let thy loving spirit so guide me in the ways of peace and safety, that with the testimony of a good con-

science, and the sense of thy mercies and refreshment, I may depart this life in the unity of the church, in the love of God, and a certain hope of salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord, and most blessed Saviour. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

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*A short Morning Prayer.*

O ALMIGHTY God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of mercy and comfort, with reverence and fear, with humble confidence and strong desires, I approach to the throne of grace, begging of thee mercy and protection, pardon and salvation. O my God, I am a sinner, but sorrowful and repenting; thou art justly offended at me, but yet thou art my Lord and my Father, merciful and gracious. Be pleased to blot all my sins out of thy remembrance, and heal my soul, that I may never any more sin against thee. Lord, open my eyes, that I may see my own infirmi-

ties, and watch against them; and my own follies, that I may amend them; and be pleased to give me perfect understanding in the way of godliness, that I may walk in it all the days of my pilgrimage. Give me a spirit diligent in the works of my calling, cheerful and zealous in religion, fervent and frequent in my prayers, charitable and useful in my conversation. Give me a healthful and a chaste body, a pure and an holy soul, a sanctified and a humble spirit; and let my body, and soul, and spirit be preserved unblameable, to the coming of the Lord Jesus.

Blessed be thy name, O God, and blessed be thy mercies, who hast preserved me this night from sin and sorrow, from sad chances and a violent death, from the malice of the devil, and the evil effects of my own corrupted nature and infirmity. The outgoings of the morning and evening shall praise thee; and thy servants shall rejoice in giving thee praise for the operation of thy

hands. Let thy providence and care watch over me this day, and all my whole life; that I may never sin against thee by idleness or folly, by evil company or private sins, by word or deed, by thought or desire. And let the employment of the day leave no sorrow, or the remembrance of an evil conscience at night; but let it be holy and profitable, blessed and always innocent; that when the days of my short abode are done, and the shadow is departed, I may die in thy fear and favour, and rest in a holy hope, and at last return to the joys of a blessed resurrection, through Jesus Christ, in whose name, and in whose words, in behalf of myself, and all my friends, and all thy servants, I humbly and heartily pray,

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

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*A short Evening Prayer.*

ETERNAL God, Almighty Father of men and angels, by whose care and pro-



vidence. I am preserved and blessed, comforted and assisted; I humbly beg of thee to pardon the sins and follies of this day, the weaknesses of my services, and the strength of my passions, the rashness of my words, and the vanity and evil of my actions. O just and merciful God! how long shall I confess my sins, and pray against them, and yet fall under them? Oh! let it be so no more; let me never return to the follies of which I am ashamed, which bring sorrow and death, and thy displeasure worse than death. Give me a command over my evil inclinations, and a perfect hatred of sin, and a love to thee above all the desires of this world. Be pleased to bless and preserve me this night from all sin, and all violence of chance; and the malice of the spirits of darkness; watch over me in my sleep; and whether I sleep or wake, let me be thy servant. Be thou first and last in all my thoughts, and the guide and continual assistance of all my actions. Preserve my body, pardon the

sin of my soul, and sanctify my spirit. Let me always live holily, and justly, and soberly; and when I die, receive my soul into thy hands, O holy and ever-blessed Jesus; that I may long for thy coming, and hear thy blessed sentence at doomsday, and behold thy face, and live in thy kingdom, singing praises to God for ever and ever. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

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*A Prayer referring to the Divine presence.*  
O ALMIGHTY God, infinite and eternal, thou fillest all things with thy presence; thou art every where by thy essence and by thy power; in heaven by glory, in holy places by thy grace and favour, in the hearts of thy servants by thy Spirit, in the consciences of all men by thy testimony and observation of us. Teach me to walk always as in thy presence, to fear thy majesty, to reverence thy wisdom and omniscience; that I may never dare to commit any sin in the eye of my

Lord and my Judge; but that I may, with so much care and reverence, demean myself, that my Judge, may not be my accuser, but my advocate; that I, expressing the belief of thy presence here by careful walking, may feel the effects of it in the participation of eternal glory, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

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*A Prayer for holy Intention in the beginning and pursuit of any considerable Action.*

O ETERNAL God, who hast made all things for man, and man for thy glory, sanctify my body and soul, my thoughts and my intentions, my words and actions, that whatsoever I shall think, or speak, or do, may be by me designed to the glorification of thy name, and by thy blessing it may be effective and successful in the work of God, according as it can be capable. Lord, turn my necessities into virtue; the works of nature into the works of grace, by making them orderly, regular, temperate, sub-

ordinate, and profitable to ends beyond their own proper efficacy ; and let no pride or self-seeking, no covetousness or revenge, no impure mixture or unhandsome purposes, no little ends and low imaginations, pollute my spirit, and unhallow any of my words and actions ; but let my body be a servant of my spirit, and both body and spirit servants of Jesus ; that doing all things for thy glory here, I may be partaker of thy glory hereafter, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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*A Prayer to be said before the hearing or reading the word of God.*

O HOLY and eternal Jesus, who hast begotten us by thy word, renewed us by thy Spirit, fed us by thy sacraments, and by the daily ministry of thy word ; still go on to build us up to life eternal. Let thy most Holy Spirit be present with me, and rest upon me in the reading or hearing thy sacred word ; that I may do it humbly, reverently, without

prejudice, with a mind ready and desirous to learn to obey; that I may be readily furnished and instructed to every good work, and may practise all thy holy laws and commandments to the glory of thy holy name, O holy and eternal Jesus. Amen.

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*A Prayer for the Spirit of Prayer.*

O HOLY and eternal God, who hast commanded us to pray unto thee in all our necessities, and to give thanks unto thee for all our instances of joy and blessing, and to adore thee in all thy attributes and communications, thy own glories and thy eternal mercies; give unto me, thy servant, the spirit of prayer and supplication, that I may understand what is good for me, that I may desire regularly, and choose the best things, that I may conform to thy will; and submit to thy disposing, relinquishing my own affections and imperfect choice. Sanctify my heart and spirit, that I may sanctify thy name, and that I may be

gracious and accepted in thine eyes; give me the humility and obedience of a servant, that I may also have the hope and confidence of a son, making humble and confident addresses to the throne of grace, that in all my necessities I may come to thee for aids, and may trust in thee for a gracious answer, and may receive satisfaction and supply.

Give me a sober, diligent, and recollected spirit in my prayers, neither choked with cares, nor scattered by levity, nor discomposed by passion, nor estranged from thee by inadvertency; but fixed fast to thee by the indissoluble bands of a great love, and a fervent devotion; and let the beams of thy Holy Spirit descending from above, enlighten and enkindle it with great fervours and holy importunity and unwearied industry. Let my prayers come before thy presence, and the lifting up of my hands be a daily sacrifice; and let the fires of zeal not go out by night or day; but unite my prayers to the intercession of

the holy Jesus, and to a communion of those offices which angels and beatified souls do pay before the throne of the Lamb, and at the celestial altar; that my prayers being hallowed by the merits of Christ, may ascend thither, where thy glory dwells, and from whence mercy and eternal benediction descends upon thy church, O holy and eternal God, blessed Trinity and mysterious Unity, to whom all honour, and worship, and thanks, and confession, and glory be ascribed for ever and ever. Amen.

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*A Prayer against Sensuality.*

O ETERNAL Father, thou that sittest in heaven invested with essential glories and divine perfections, fill my soul with so deep a sense of the excellences of spiritual and heavenly things, that my affections, being weaned from the pleasures of the world and the false allurements of sin, I may, with great severity and the prudence of a holy discipline and strict desires, with clear resolutions

and a free spirit, have my conversation in heaven and heavenly employments; that being in affections as in my condition, a pilgrim and a stranger here, I may covet after and labour for an abiding city, and at last may enter into, and for ever dwell in, the celestial Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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*A Prayer for Meekness of Spirit.*

O ALMIGHTY Judge of men and angels; whose anger is always the minister of justice, slow, but severe, not lightly arising, but falling heavily when it comes; give to thy servant a meek and a gentle spirit, that I also may be slow to anger, and easy to mercy and forgiveness. Give me a wise and a constant heart, that I may not be moved with every trifling mistake, and inconsiderable accident, in the conversation and intercourse of others; never be moved to an intemperate anger for any injury, that is done or offered; let my anger



ever be upon a just cause, measured with moderation and reason, expressed with charity and prudence, lasting but till it hath done some good either upon myself or others.

Lord, let me be ever courteous, and easy to be entreated; never let me fall into a peevish or contentious spirit, but follow peace with all men, offering forgiveness, inviting them by courtesies, ready to confess my own errors, apt to make amends, and desirous to be reconciled. Let no sickness or cross accident, no employment or weariness, make me angry or ungentle, and discontent, or unthankful, or uneasy to them that minister to me; but in all things make me like unto the holy Jesus. Give me the spirit of a Christian, charitable, humble, merciful and meek, useful and liberal, complying with every chance; angry at nothing but my own sins, and grieving for the sins of others; that while my passion obeys my reason, and my reason is religious, and my religion is pure and

undefiled, adorned with humility and charity, I may escape thy anger which I have deserved, and may dwell in thy love, and be thy son and servant for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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*A Prayer for a contented Spirit, and the  
Grace of Moderation and Patience.*

O ALMIGHTY God, Father and Lord of all thy creatures, who hast disposed all things and all chances so as may best glorify thy wisdom, and serve the ends of thy justice, and magnify thy mercy, by secret and indiscernible ways bringing good out of evil; I most humbly beseech thee to give me wisdom from above, that I may adore thee and admire thy ways and footsteps, which are in the great deep, and not to be searched out; teach me to submit to thy providence in all things, to be content in all changes of person and condition, to be temperate in prosperity, and to read my duty in the lines of thy mercy; and in adversity to be meek, patient, and re-

signed; and to look through the cloud, that I may wait for the consolation of the Lord, and the day of redemption; in the meantime doing my duty with an unwearied diligence, and an undisturbed resolution, having no fondness for the vanities or possessions of this world; but laying up my hopes in heaven and the reward of holy living, and being strengthened with the spirit of the inner man, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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*A Prayer for Resignation in Sickness.*

O ETERNAL God, thou hast made me and sustained me, thou hast blessed me in all the days of my life, and hast taken care of me in all variety of accidents; and nothing happens to me in vain, nothing without thy providence; and I know thou smitest thy servants in mercy, and with designs of the greatest pity in the world. Lord, I humbly lie down under thy rod; do with me as thou pleasest; do thou choose for me, not only the

whole state and condition of being, but every little and great accident of it. Keep me safe by thy grace, and then use what instrument thou pleasest, of bringing me to thee. Lord, I am not solicitous of the passage, so I may get to thee. Only, O Lord, remember my infirmities, and let thy servant rejoice in thee always, and feel, and confess, and glory in thy goodness. O be thou as delightful to me in this, my medicinal sickness, as ever thou wert in any of the dangers of my prosperity; let me not peevishly refuse thy pardon at the rate of a severe discipline. I am thy servant and thy creature, thy purchased possession and thy son; I am all thine; and because thou hast mercy in store for all that trust in thee, I cover mine eyes, and in silence wait for the time of my redemption. Amen.

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*Prayers to be used in the Days of Sorrow  
and Affliction.*

O MY God and Father, in vain do we beg to have thy heavy hand taken from us so long as the cause remains ; my sins, O God, my sins, are so great, so numerous, so intolerable, that I must needs with shame hide my face, and confess I have deserved all the evil that I suffer, and all that which thou hast threatened. I have, O God, more to give thee thanks for than I have to deplore. It is thy infinite mercy that I am yet kept from feeling thy severest judgments. It is thy mercy, that I have my senses and my understanding, that I have the use of thy word and sacraments, that I have not intolerable pains of body and unsufferable troubles in my mind; it is thy blessing that I have bread, that I have any friends, that I have the prayers of thy faithful servants, that I have faith in thee, and that I have hope. It is thy infinite mercy, that I am yet kept

from the insufferable pains of hell, and am permitted to pray to thee, to rely upon thy mercies, to work out my salvation, and to expect thy loving-kindness in the land of the living.

All the evils that I suffer, I have deserved, but nothing of the good have I deserved. I am less than the least of all thy mercies, and my sins are greater than the greatest of all my sufferings. And now, O God, thou who hast so mercifully dealt with thy servant in taking a less fine of me than in justice thou mightest have exacted, be pleased also to proceed in the methods of thy mercy; and make my present sufferings to be instrumental of thy glory, of the pardon of my sins, of the sanctification of my spirit, of the humiliation of my soul, that, like silver tried in the fire, I may come forth a more pure vessel of honour, pleasing and acceptable to thee in Jesus Christ. Amen.

I know, O God, that thou art infinitely wise and infinitely good, and thou dis-

posest all the events of thy creatures to excellent purposes, and delightest to bring good out of evil. Behold, O God, I am thy servant and thy creature, do to me as seemeth good in thine eyes; only give me patience and a long-suffering spirit, that I may not murmur secretly when I complain openly; that I may not make haste in the day of my calamity, but with a quiet spirit expect and wait for the time of my redemption. But make no long tarrying, O Lord; make haste to help me, O God of my salvation; and be pleased to give me a light from heaven, that with the eye of faith, I may see beyond the cloud, and look for those comforts which thou didst prepare for thy servants that love thee, and put their trust in thee, and have laid up all their hopes in the bosom of God.

Be pleased, O God, to add this favour unto thy servant, that my trouble may not be doubled or increased by my own infirmities; take from me all trouble-

some fancies and too quick apprehensions of my sorrows; blessed be thy name, they are finite, and they are temporal sorrows, they are less than my sins, and they are less than thy mercies. Give me grace to despise the world, and all its interests and possessions; that while I set not my affections upon them, I may not be too much afflicted, when I am crossed in them; but let my great care be to please thee, my greatest fears lest I should sin against thee. Let my duty be my employment, thy providence my portion, thy Spirit my guide, thy law my rule; that when this cloud is passed over, I may see the brightness of thy face, and perpetual showers of grace and mercy, refreshing my sad and weary spirit; so shall thy servant sing praises to the honour of thy name, when thou shalt have saved my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling; grant these mercies, O blessed God, and Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.



All blessing, and praise, and honour, be unto thee, O blessed Redeemer; and to thee we, the banished and miserable sons of Adam, do call for mercy and defence, and to thee we sigh and cry in this valley of tears. O gracious Advocate, turn those thy merciful eyes towards us, and show us thy glorious face in thy kingdom, where no tears or sighing, or fears or sadness can approach. Amen. Blessed Jesu. Amen.

THE END.

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